Stourbridge
CHRONICLE

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Leader says track for speedway club is 'paramount'

PLEDGE TO BRING HEATHENS HOME

Cllr Patrick Harley

Report by Luke Bartlett

THE LEADER of Dudley Council has pledged to do everything he can to find famous Black Country speedway club Cradley Heathens a permanent home in the borough.

Councillor Patrick Harley says he has been in talks with the club's bosses in efforts to find the team their own permanent track where they can have race meetings.

The team have been homeless for more than 20 years, since leaving their base at Dudley Wood, and have been sharing grounds with clubs in Wolverhampton, Birmingham and Stoke in recent years.

But now Councillor Harley has said it is 'paramount' that the local authority take action to find them the Heathens somewhere to call their home – following another failed attempt just weeks ago.

Councillor Harley said: "There are two groups – the supporters group and the organisation that is Cradley speedway.

"I have met with both of them trying to find some way forward to try and get them a home back in the borough.

"I thought we had found a home a few weeks ago but unfortunately after having officers meet with the land owners, they do have a use for that land.

Search

"The search goes on to try and help the Cradley Heathens. I do realise that it is absolutely paramount to try and find them somewhere in the borough."

In their heyday, Cradley Heathens won 13 trophies in 17 years and produced seven world champions. Cradley Heathens was founded in Dudley in 1947 and competed at the top level of British speedway until 1995 when the team closed.

But the team was revived in 2010 as Dudley Heathens and competed in the National League. In 2013 the club's name changed back to Cradley Heathens.

The club, which now track shares with Wolverhampton at Monmore Green, withdrew from the National League at the end of last season and currently races only in National Trophy fixtures, sharing its riders with other clubs.

The Motor Market Cradley Heathens' next fixture is 'home' at Wolverhampton against Mildenhall Fen Tigers on Tuesday, September 11.

"The only way we could return to full league racing is by finally securing a site of our own," said club director Nigel Pearson at the start of the trophy campaign.

The comments from Councillor Harley came as part of a live Q&A session the council boss was hosting on Facebook, where he also answered questions on a range of issues, from homelessness in the borough and to illegal traveller camps.

Region to be first to test 5G technology

THE West Midlands has won the race to become the UK's first 5G mobile internet test bed.

According to the Digital Minister Margot James, who is also MP for Stourbridge: "5G has the potential to dramatically transform the way we go about our daily lives.

"We want the citizens of the UK to be amongst the first to experience all the opportunities and benefits this new technology will bring. The West Midlands Testbed, which is the first of its kind anywhere in the world, will be instrumental in helping us realise this ambition."

The region beat competition from 18 other areas of the country to land the multi-million pound deal, which will see it get super-fast connectivity.

The pilot scheme will see an initial £50 million of Government cash used to create a 5G network across the region. It will give mobile users reliable network speeds of up to 1GB, enabling downloads in seconds, as well as providing a major boost for businesses.

The West Midlands Combined Authority will now work with the Government's 5G testbeds and trials team and industry partners. The first series of 5G projects are expected to be launched early next year, and will focus on health, construction and automotive sectors. Initial schemes could include live streaming of security CCTV footage from buses and 'connected ambulances' enabling paramedic crews to access specialist advice.

AMY READY TO KEEP DANCING

Dudley-based dancer Amy Dowden is looking forward to taking part in the new series of Strictly Come Dancing, which launches on BBC TV on Saturday evening. The Welsh ballroom and Latin star, pictured with her professional competition partner and fiance Ben Jones, will learn on Saturday's show which celebrity she will be partnering in the quest for the famous Strictly champions' glitterball. Last year she danced with comedian Brian Conley. Amy and Ben run the Art in Motion Dance Academy in Dudley.

THEATRE

College planning to bulldoze Hippodrome

HOPES to revive Dudley Hippodrome as a theatre have been dashed after it was revealed that Dudley College has firm plans to develop the prime site on Castle Hill.

College bosses have had their sights on the land for months and are now developing plans to bulldoze the landmark 1930s building to continue the expansion of the college.

A bid for the site is expected to be lodged this month and, if successful, would end hopes of rescuing Dudley Hippodrome once and for all.

● Demolition – page 2

HIT-AND-RUN

Action of white van driver condemned

DUDLEY Council leader Patrick Harley has condemned the actions of a van driver who was caught on camera driving at speed towards two children at Woodside Park.

It comes after video footage emerged online showing the white van driven with the apparent intention to hit the children at the park near Netherton.

An 11-year-old and a 12-year-old were left with minor injuries following the incident on Monday last week.

TRAFFIC

Commuters face a year of delays

PARADISE Circus in Birmingham is shut to traffic until next summer as part of the latest phase of Midland Metro works, leaving commuters facing diversions to get around the city.

The main road is closed in both directions, potentially causing gridlock at busy times and it promises to be anything but paradise for drivers.

INSIDE

COUNTDOWN TO CONTEST

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Demolition likely at Dudley Hippodrome

DUDLEY College it to table a bid to take over the site of local landmark the Dudley Hippodrome – resulting in the former variety theatre on Castle Hill being bulldozed.

Education bosses have had their sights on the land for months and are now developing firm plans to use the site for the continued expansion of the college.

A bid for the site is expected to be lodged this month and, if successful, would end hopes of rescuing the venue and reviving it as a theatre

Dudley Council invited companies to submit 'expressions of interest' in the former bingo hall in July following the collapse of a community-led bid to re-open the 1930s-built venue as a theatre. In its heyday it hosted such stars at Laurel and Hardy, George Formby, Ken Dodd and Bruce Forsyth.

A college spokesman said: "The college is interested in developing the facility and with a number of partners we are working on a proposal for consideration."

Developing

The college has acknowledged it had an interest in the site but it is the first time it has publicly stated its intentions for developing it. It is understood the college would have no interest it retaining the Castle Hill building.

Education bosses are keen to continue the rapid growth of the college, which has become one of the most respected post-16 learning centres in the region under the leadership of principal Lowell Williams.

Hopes the Hippodrome could be saved were all-but dashed last year by the new Conservative council leadership. Council leader Patrick Harley said he wanted to draw a line under the Hippodrome issue 'once and for all'.

The building stands derelict and has not been used since 2009. Thousands had signed a petition to save the building but the presence of dangerous asbestos added to the costs.

More than 40,000 call for justice for Ryan

A PETITION to spark a Parliamentary debate on a ground-breaking legal fight to get justice for a young knife victim has reached the 40,000 mark.

The news came as more than 200 bikers took part in a fund-raising ride-out in memory of Ryan Passey, from Stourbridge, who died following a stabbing at a nightclub in the town in August last year.

The event raised £1,800 for his family's fighting fund and a raffle is expected to boost the total to more than £2,000.

It was organised by John Hill, a close friend of Ryan's father and licensee of The Widders pub, in Barrack Lane, Halesowen, where the ride-out to Bridgnorth started from and ended.

He said: "We've raised more than £30,000 over five years for different charities here at the pub but this is the most important cause so far."

Ryan's father Adrian Passey, who attended the ride-out with other family members, said: "I've been overwhelmed by the turn-out and the support we've been getting. This was an amazing day."

In February, Kobe Murray was found not guilty of the murder and manslaughter of 24-year-old amateur footballer Ryan following a two-week trial at Birmingham Crown Court. He admitted stabbing Ryan but said it happened accidentally as he was pushing him away. He also said the knife had belonged to a friend.

West Midlands Police is reviewing the case, with officers looking for new evidence. Stourbridge MP Margot James has written to the Government's Attorney General over the case

The victim's family and friends are calling for a right to appeal jury verdicts. Their campaign, called Justice For Ryan, is seeking a change in the law to allow victims and their families to challenge a jury's acquittal decision.

If their petition reaches 100,000 signatures, their cause will be debated in Parliament.

Family friend Jason Connon said 25,000 people had so far signed the online petition while another 15,000 names had been added to paper petitions at events including as Sunday's ride-out.

Around £10,000 has been raised towards the fighting fund to cover legal costs. Mr Connon said: "It's going to be a long and difficult fight but we're not going to give up."

Also at the ride-out were Ryan's mother Gill, her husband Phil Taylor, and Adrian's partner Debbie.

The next fundraiser will be a memorial football match between Wolves All-Stars and a 'Justice for Ryan' team on September 30 at Stourbridge FC, preceded by a march highlighting the rise in knife crime.

Bikers at The Widders Pub, Halesowen, for a ride-out to help raise funds for the fighting fund launched by stabbing victim Ryan Passey's family. Pictured in the foreground are Ryan's dad Adrian, ride-out organiser John Hill, Ryan's mum Gill and Ryan's stepdad Phil Taylor

Rare chance to go behind the scenes at civic buildings

SIX important heritage buildings in Dudley will be throwing open their doors to the public as part of Heritage Open Day on Saturday.

The event is a celebration of the country's architecture and culture, and venues not usually open to the public allow access to enable visitors to discover the hidden treasures within.

Visitors will be able to view the 1920s-built grade II listed Coroner's Court, which retains its original fittings and furnishings. They can also see the famous Hans Feibusch mural, together with the rarely seen preliminary sketches, at the Town Hall, and step back in time at the Unitarian Old Meeting House, which is one of the oldest buildings in Dudley.

Visitors will also be able to sit in the council chamber where important decisions are made, and have a rare behind the scenes peek at the ancient 'Top' and 'Bottom' churches, where there will be tours, refreshments and special events.

Anyone wishing to view the buildings should turn up at most venues between 10am and 4pm, with the exception of Dudley Town Hall, which will be open between 11am and 3pm. No booking is required.

Heritage Open Days is a scheme that encourages owners of historically important buildings to open them free of charge to the public.

£10,000 reward after arson attack

A £10,000 reward has been put up to catch four arsonists who targeted a warehouse and office complex.

Bosses from Commercial Body Fittings in Coseley have offered the large sum in return for information leading to the prosecution of the gang.

They were seen on CCTV clad in hoodies and face masks emptying petrol into the ground floor window of the building on Budden Road at aroun 12.30am on August 6.

A spokesperson for the firm said: "The police have got some good inquiries going on and there are a couple of suspects. They haven't broken in to steal anything – they have broken in to burn the place down."

Anyone with information is asked to call West Midlands Police on 101.

Ozzy rocks back for his final Brum gig

ROCK legend Ozzy Osbourne has announced a hometown show as part of his final world tour.

The former Black Sabbath frontman, 69, will play six shows in the UK including the Genting Arena on February 9. Judas Priest will support.

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Praise for children's service from watchdog

DUDLEY Council's children's services have been praised for its progress by Government watchdogs despite warnings that social workers are struggling with workloads.

Ofsted's findings have been welcomed by the council's cabinet member with responsibility for children who said it showed the authority was improving services for vulnerable youngsters and young people.

Responding to a letter reporting on Ofsted's latest monitoring visit, Cllr Angus Lees, said: "We are pleased with the findings of the monitoring visit, which demonstrate we are continuing to move in the right direction to transform services.

"I'm particularly pleased it makes reference to the good work of our social workers and staff, who work tirelessly to help the children in our borough who need it the most."

Inspectors also observed social work practice and praised leaders and senior managers, saying "clear strategic plans" were in place to further improve services in Dudley.

Inspectors reported they "did not see any children or young people at risk of significant harm" during their visit.

But the inspectors also found that high caseloads were affecting its ability to recruit and retain staff,.

A full inspection will take place later this year.

Music night to focus on scandal

A DUDLEY writer is to host a night of comedy, music and poetry with a serious message.

Greg Stokes will be highlighting the contaminated blood scandal in the NHS during the event at The Lamp Tavern, High Street, on Friday, September 21, from 8pm. Admission £3 on the door.

The evening with Greg Stokes and Friends will take place three days before the public inquiry begins into the scandal which saw thousands of people with haemophilia and associated conditions given transfusions of contaminated blood clotting factor. Many have since developed and died from HIV and hepatitis C. There have been claims of a cover up over how much doctors knew about the dangers.

Beans bonanza

DUDLEY Zoo chimps have got a treat thanks to gardeners Laura Hamilton and her mother Pat. They produced a bumper crop of runner beans on their Northfield allotment and donated their surplus for the primates.

Netherton pub saved from the bulldozers

The Bunch of Bluebells in Netherton

A CONTROVERSIAL plan to bulldoze an historic pub in Dudley has been blocked by council bosses who said demolition would result in losing a piece of the borough's heritage.

Officials moved to stop the demolition of the Bunch of Bluebells in Netherton and insist the building should be left standing, despite it becoming a target for vandalism and fly-tippers.

In refusing the application, an officer stated the the pub contributes to 'local character and distinctiveness of Netherton'. The officer's report said: "The applicant has failed to demonstrate the economic, social and environmental gains of the proposed scheme, particularly in the absence of clear and convincing justification for the loss of the heritage asset and the negative impact this will have on the local character and distinctiveness of the area.

History

The report continued: "The proposal fails to respond adequately to the local character, distinctiveness and context of the local area."

Councillor Ian Kettle, cabinet member for regeneration, said: "We have a history to be proud of in Dudley borough and it's important we ensure that decisions that affect the future of buildings or other assets with historical significance are taken with due consideration.

"We refused due to lack of evidence of what benefits the demolition would bring, the fact it would result in losing a piece of local heritage and no plans are in place for the future use of the site once demotion occurred."

Help us make streets safer, says police chief

DUDLEY'S new police chief has vowed to get out on the beat and not have her feet stuck under a desk as she takes on her latest challenge.

Chief Superintendent Sally Bourner has taken charge of Dudley as she marks 28 years of service with West Midlands Police.

Her appointment coincides with the results of a survey by The Chronicle's sister newspaper with the Express & Star's crime survey revealing that more than half of readers do not feel safe and two thirds never see police on patrol in their area. Around 10,000 people responded to the survey in just two weeks.

Ch Supt Bourner said she doesn't shy away from this, saying: "Our most important relationship of all is our relationship with the people."

She said of the survey: "It makes me sad if that is how people feel with police because that neighbourhood relationship is almost the front door into the entirety of what we do within policing.

Challenges

"In terms of presence, I would say we are significantly smaller than we were. Every force is significantly smaller, therefore we do the maths that means there are fewer officers and PCSOs out on the ground.

"One of the biggest challenges we face at the moment is how we ensure that we deliver on the here-and-now imperative to deal with citizens' need,s while at the same time working with our neighbourhood teams and with our wider partnership and prevent that harm happening in the first instance to stem the relentless demand coming in.

"Our relationship with partners around prevention and intervention is crucial. The police are the public and the public are the police.

"We cannot do what we do without the public being our eyes and ears which is why our neighbourhood teams are so crucial, they are the face and voice on the ground with local people."

She continued: "As commander of the borough, one of the things I am going to regularly do is get out and about, not having my feet under the desk but actually getting out on the beat with colleagues to understand the issues they are grappling with and listening to local people." Prior to this role, she led the region's force contact centre which dealt with between 6,000 and 7,000 calls a day.

Dudley's new police boss Chief Superintendent Sally Bourner has 28 years experience as an officer

She became a chief superintendent in 2011, making her one of the most experienced in the West Midlands, and has previously worked in Wolverhampton as well as being a commander in Solihull.

She added: "We have to find better ways to work with the public and our partners to prioritise the two things that are fundamental to what we do – focusing on offenders and actually protecting the most vulnerable people from harm.

"I would say link in with your neighbourhood teams.

!We are one big team at the end of the day and we are driven to help make our communities and the lives of our citizens better.

"We cannot do that on our own."

NEWS IN BRIEF

RAF parade to attract a crowd

CROWDS are expected for an annual veterans' parade next weekend as the Royal Air Force marks its centenary.

The Dudley branch of the Royal Air Forces Association will host the Battle of Britain memorial parade and service on Sunday, September 16.

The parade will be made of up of veterans, Royal Air Force cadet squadrons and serving personnel stationed at RAF Cosford. It will be followed by a service at Dudley Parish Church in Vicar Street.

The public are invited to join the service and watch the march through the town centre. The event, attended by the mayor, starts at 11.30am.

Park's £55k play area is to open

NEW park play equipment which cost £55,000 is set to be unveiled in Kingswinford tomorrow (Friday).

An official opening will be carried out at Cot Lane Park at 3pm at a ceremony attended by Dudley South MP Mike Wood.

Out-dated equipment in place for a quarter of a century has been ripped out and replaced. Safer surfacing has been installed. New equipment will include monkey bars, a roundabout, slide, seesaw, rope nets and swings. It will be designed so it is more accessible for disabled youngsters too.

New season of local history talks

SEDGLEY Local History Society's new season of talks begins on Thursday, September 13.

The meeting at 7.30 pm in St. Andrew's Church, Bilston Street, will see Barbara Price, who has carried out extensive research covering over 750 local soldiers who served in the First World Wat.

Her illustrated talk covers Sedgley, the Gornals and Hurst Hill.

It costs £2 for visitors and annual membership of the Society costs £5 and gives free access to the full programme of talks for 2018-2019.

Back to Tudor times at historic old hall

CRADLEY Heath's Haden Old Hall goes back to Tudor times next Sunday, September 16. The Terrific Tudors event runs from noon to 4pm with free entry.

The Friends of Haden Hill Estate are putting on falconry displays, music and historical re-enactments, including a visit from a Tudor doctor.

A tour of the old hall cellars takes place on September 13, but places must be booked. Call (01384) 569444.

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COUNTY NEWS

Commissioner role move stalls

PLANS to combine the role of Police and Crime Commissioner with the mayoralty in the West Midlands by 2020 have been dealt a blow. Councillors in Coventry have not been able to reach an agreement to back the plans, put forward by the Government.

It does not necessarily mean the end for the proposals, but all seven areas that make up the West Midlands Combined Authority, including Wolverhampton and the other three Black Country boroughs, must agree if the plan is to be passed. A vote is due at the board meeting on September 14

David Jamieson is currently Police and Crime Commissioner.

Chef recruitment on menu at park

DRAYTON Manor Theme Park is on the lookout for talented chefs to join the team at its four-star hotel and grill restaurant. The Staffordshire park. near Tamworth, is looking to fill a number of roles, including apprentices, commis chef and chef de partie positions.

Workers also receive a free theme park ticket allowance for family and friends, free on-site parking, discounted hotel stays through the Interstate UK hotel portfolio and 30 days annual leave per year.

More information is available at draytonmanor.co.uk/recruitment/current-vacancies.

Fire service issue warning on plugs

WEST Midlands Fire Service is warning that a faulty remote controlled plug socket set which has been sold on the market could set homes on fire.

The service has issued a product recall warning and urged people using them to 'switch off and unplug now'.

It comes after manufacturer Rolson Tools was notified by their supplier SMJ Electrical of a safety issue with this product.

For more information see sales@rolsontools.com

Blues star Joanne sells out the Robin on tour

A HOMECOMING concert by internationally-renowned blues star Joanne Shaw Taylor has sold out at a Black Country venue. Bilston's Robin 2 club is hosting the Wednesbury-born star as part of her upcoming UK tour.

The guitarist and singer, who recently signed a deal with Sony Music, on the Silvertone label, for three albums will be playing the 700-capacity venue on October 7.

Farewell to much-loved comedian, 74, at church service

Tributes – Ian 'Sludge' Lees

Wolves legend John Richards arrives

The floral tribute inside the hearse

Ex-Wolves, Walsall and Albion star Don Goodman

Stars come out for big Sludge send-off

Carrying the coffin, family members wear Sludge's colourful jackets

Brummie comedian, Jasper Carrott, with Black Country entertainer Kenny Craig

COMEDIANS, entertainers and football legends gave their final, heartfelt tributes to beloved Black Country comic Ian 'Sludge' Lees at his funeral.

Report by Megan Archer

More than 100 family members, friends and celebrities packed St Mary's Church in Cannock to say goodbye.

Mourners included comedians Jasper Carrott and Johnny Carroll, and Wolves legends John Richards and Don Goodman.

The Cannock-born star and Wolves supporter died on July 30, aged 74, just weeks after being diagnosed with cancer. He is survived by his partner Diane Mills and four children, Amanda, Daniel, Sophie and Tom. Emotional and tearful tributes were made by each of his children during the service last Wednesday.

His eldest son Daniel said: "Our dad had presence, timing and the ability to turn all situations into his favour. He was never happier than when he had a room full of people in hysterics."

Tom added: "Dad always tried to see the funny side of things. It's his fault too that I had an unhealthy obsession with Wolverhampton Wanderers. Some of the best times with dad were at Molineux. It would take us an hour to get round though as people were always stopping him for photos. He really was loved, he was just so kind to others."

Sludge's manager and close friend Jake Elcock called him a 'comedy legend'.

He said: "There are certain comedy routines that will always be associated with him – the Eric Cantona TV sketch for example. Even now every time a football player gets a red card my grandsons still chant 'what they sent him off for?'

"And most of all his boxing routine. No matter how many times you saw it it still brought gales of laughter – 'There was a familiar face in the third row, it was mine. I got knocked down, the ref said get up at nine, I said what time is it now? I was a chicken weight, I always had the stuffing knocked out of me'."

TV personality and comedian Jasper Carrott attended the service, and paid tribute.

"We were this band of comic brothers. We all looked after each other," he said.

"I didn't know Ian desperately well but I worked with him many a time. He was a great comic and so reliable. There's a comedy club up there now. When I get up there I'm going to have trouble getting on the stage. I'm here to pay tribute to a very special comedian."

And Black Country entertainer Kenny Craig said: "We had a great camaraderie. They were fabulous days. Ian led a great life."

Planners to visit site proposed for cemetery

A HUGE new cemetery will be built opposite Rowley Regis Crematorium to provide much-needed new burial space, under plans set to go before councillors.

Planning officials are due to visit a vast site backing onto homes on Powke Lane, where council bosses want the new cemetery to be created.

The land, next to Powke Lane Industrial Estate, has been identified to provide burial space and is just a short distance from the crematorium, which recently underwent a £1.3 million revamp. A new car park would also be created to serve the new cemetery.

Sandwell Council chiefs have been desperately searching for land to create burial space.

Planning committee members are due to visit the site this week and a decision on whether to give it the go-ahead is expected in early October.

However, the land, which is currently open green space, is popular with dog-walkers and its possible loss has sparked anger.

Documents with the application said: "The current application is to change the use of part of Powke Lane open space to a cemetery and will includewidening of the existing access of Powke Lane, erection of an office building with toilets and an operation yard, creation of a car park and associated works including CCTV, lighting and landscaping."

Rowley Regis councillor Susan Eaves supports the plan. "We need a new cemetery. We will run out of space in a few years," she said. "I know there are a lot of people who are up in arms about it but we need to have it somewhere."

Maternity services feedback at event

WOMEN are invited to an event on maternity services. During the last year the Black Country Local Maternity System has hosted a number of 'Whose Shoes' events, organised to talk to women and their families about issues or concerns they have.

NHS organisations from across the region have now reviewed the findings from all events and are coming together to share the feedback and show how they will take this work forward to improve maternity services.

The event, called 'You Said, We Did' is on September 26 at The Holiday Inn in Walsall. Refreshments will be provided. Those interested are urged to book early to avoid disappointment. Tickets are free of charge. Visit eventbrite.co.uk and search 'LMS: You Said, We Did' for more.

Father denies playing role in acid attack on young boy

THE father of a three-year-old boy injured in a suspected acid attack has denied conspiring with six other people to carry out the assault.

The youngster suffered serious burns to his face and arm at the Home Bargains store in Worcester on July 21.

His 39-year-old father is charged with conspiring to commit grievous bodily harm in connection with the incident, in the Tallow Hill area of the city. The man, who cannot be named, pleaded not guilty at Worcester Crown Court last week.

Five other men – Adam Cech, 27, and Jan Dudi, 25, both from Birmingham; Norbert Pulko, 22, and Saied Hussini, 41, both from London, and Jabar Paktia, 41, from Wolverhampton – all denied the same charge.

Martina Badiova, 22, of Newcombe Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, also appeared in the dock. She was the seventh person arrested in connection with the investigation. The defendants spoke with the assistance of four different interpreters, using the Dari, Pashto, Czech and Slovak languages, and were flanked by seven dock officers. About 30 family and friends of the defendants packed the public gallery.

The case was adjourned for a preliminary hearing on September 21. All were remanded into custody to appear back at the same court.

Associations could take over church

THREE community groups in Tipton have expressed an interest in buying a church which faces closure.

The Grade II-listed St Martin and St Paul Church will close under a current application from the Diocese of Lichfield. The proposal to shut the Gothic church, built in 1837, is down to a lack of resources for maintenance.

However, Tipton Community Association, Tipton Civic Society and St Paul's Community Association have contacted the diocese about buying the church.

Civic Society chairman Keith Hodgkins said the joint venture could solve a problem faced by all three groups in not having a large enough venue.

Consultation on the church closure ends on September 24.

Homes approved

HOMES may be built on land in Dudley under plans given a green light by planners. Dudley Council approved a scheme, subject to conditions, to build four homes between Regent House and Greystone Passage.

Just days before your chance to vote

THERE are just days to go until voting begins in the Express & Star's Baby of the Year competition.

More than 750 little ones were photographed by snapper Andrea Powell at intu Merry Hill and the Mander Centre in Wolverhampton.

Families were invited to choose the perfect picture to feature in a 24-page supplement, in next Wednesday's Express & Star (September 12), when people will get their chance to vote for their favourites.

Parents, grandparents, uncles and aunties will have the opportunity to vote for their winner by collecting tokens printed in our sister daily, the Express & Star. Tokens will be available to cut out of the newspaper from then until Saturday, October 13.

Some days will also feature bumper bonus tokens, with quadruple token editions, and even 10 available to collect on other days.

There are some serious prizes on offer across four age categories, and a bonus for the overall winner. There will be a £500 prize for the winner in each of the following categories – 0-9 months, 10-18 months, 19-35 months, and 3-5 years – and a £250 bonus for the overall winner. It is the first year the Express & Star has run the competition.

Once you've picked, cut out the vote tokens and complete a Voting Tokens Return Form. Tokens can be sent in batches or together in one envelope after the last one has been printed, but a form must be included each time.

The deadline for returning tokens is October 19. Find out more by visiting the website https://www.baby.expressandstar.com

TV star Ross goes on raids with armed police

ROSS Kemp's new documentary following armed West Midlands Police officers will be on TV screens tonight (Thursday).

Ross Kemp and the Armed Police will take viewers behind the scenes with the region's firearms officers in footage filmed across the Black Country and Birmingham earlier this year.

Former EastEnders actor Kemp was spotted several times in the region during filming – including at McDonald's restaurants in Bentley Bridge, Wolverhampton and Stourbridge. He also posed for photos with Walsall and Wolverhampton Force Response officers.

The show, which examines how armed police are dealing with the rise in gun crime in the region, will premier on ITV at 9pm on September 6 and then will be available on catch up,

In the documentary, Kemp dons a bullet-proof vest, accompanies the police on house raids and embeds himself with the team, while he also meets gun smugglers who claim the police have lost control of illegal arms importation.

Gang

Kemp also meets the families of victims of gun violence, including the mother of a 14-year-old who was gunned down last year in a gang-related incident, and visits the National Ballistics Intelligence Service where seized guns are stored.

The actor turned documentary maker accompanied the West Midlands Police Operational Support Unit and also worked with the British Transport Police, Northumberland Police and South Yorkshire Police in the making of the documentary.

Kemp said on Twitter: "Coming to ITV on Thursday 6th September at 9pm, my new documentary, Ross Kemp and The Armed Police.

"A year in the making, hope you can watch."

Earlier in the year Kemp hit out at reports that claimed he'd found Birmingham more terrifying than Afghanistan, describing the articles as 'fake news'.

The 54-year-old said "Saying I wore the same body armour working with armed police in Birmingham as I did in Afghanistan has been turned into headlines saying it was more terrifying and shocking filming in Birmingham than in Afghanistan?! This is fake news and, I think, insulting to those who served in Afghanistan."

Ross Kemp followed armed officers around the Black Country and Birmingham for his new TV documentary

The actor turned investigative journalist received rave reviews for his 2004 documentary series Ross Kemp on Gangs that explored modern gang culture in the UK.

He followed this up with a number of popular series that included Ross Kemp in Afghanistan and Ross Kemp: Extreme World.

Figures released by the Home Office show the number of police firearms operations across the West Midlands has increased more in just a single year than in any other region in the country.

Armed police were called to 3,312 incidents in 2017/18 – up 53 per cent from the year before when there were 2,167.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hub is one-stop shop for carers

A NEW one-stop shop for carers has opened in Dudley. Run by Dudley Council, Dudley Carers Hub provides support, advice and information to carers living in the borough.

It has been set up to improve the lives of local carers who provide practical, personal or emotional support to a family member or friend due to their illness, disability, frailty or addiction. It aims to ensure they receive all of the practical help, advice and support that they need to ease their caring responsibilities.

Support on offer includes financial and legal advice, accessing financial help, emotional and wellbeing support, respite services, support planning, social groups, as well as specialist support for young carers and parent carers.

People can visit the hub in Wellington Road, open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, or call them on 01384 818723, email carers.network@dudley.gov.uk or visit www.dudley.gov.uk/carers

Leader refutes Coseley criticism

CLAIMS that Coseley is being used as a 'dumping ground' have been dismissed by a council boss.

Dudley Council leader Patrick Harley rejected comments made by residents over about plans for a rehab hostel and a council-run travellers' site. Charity Expectations UK have submitted proposals to build a 65-bedroom hostel for men on Bayer Street. Police have objected to the plan.

Addressing claims that Coseley was a 'dumping ground', Councillor Harley said: "That is absolute rubbish. That is not true in any way at all."

Delay warning as lights installed

MOTORISTS are being warned to face delays as temporary traffic lights are installed on a Tipton road.

The 24-hour signals were being installed in Locarno Road this week while Cadent Gas carry out work in the area. The lights are due to be removed by September 20.

Zoo 'farm barn' home to gecko hatchlings

DUDLEY Zoo has welcomed three new additions to its farm barn exhibit.

Three gecko hatchlings born in the zoo's reptile house have now taken up residence. Two tiny Standing's day geckos born on August 7 and 10 and a Tokay gecko that hatched on May 7 have moved to a special hatching area. The farm barn opened in August 2017 as part of a £295,000 revamp.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

Integrity of MPs in VAT rates call goes pop!

ALARMED by rising obesity levels, MPs have called for higher VAT rates for sugary and salty foods. Oh and banning Tony the Tiger from advertising Frosties.

Of course, disguising tax rises as a healthy-living campaign is the oldest trick in the politician's repertoire, although I really can't see it working. After all, if money were a factor, people would eat in moderation to keep their bills down, wouldn't they?

Meanwhile, according to the House of Commons catering service, MPs and their officials got through nearly 19,000 cans of full-sugar Coca Cola in the six months up until April this year. Which is interesting, because according to Public Health England,just a single can of full-sugar Coca Cola is enough to send you over your daily sugar allowance.

The honourable members also munched their way through 6,000 packets of crisps, 5,000 Twix packs and 2,400 Victoria sponges, not to mention 15,000 cartons of Ribena. As ever, good to them leading by example.

■ ■ ■

AT THE same time, the Government has also announced that children under the age of 18 are to be banned from buying energy drinks.

What is wrong with kids today? When I was 17, it was all about my friends and I trying to sneak a pint in the backroom of the local pub, not knocking back cans of pop that give you insomnia.

Meanwhile, experts are attributing a 60 per cent fall in the number of Black Country teenagers getting pregnant to the fact that today's youngsters do their, ahem, socialising online these days, rather than in person. Of course, a fall in teenage pregnancies is a good thing, but it does again make one wonder about the youth of today.

Anyway, back to the energy drink ban: what would be interesting to know is – how many of the MPs who are in favour of this also want to see 16-year-olds being given the vote?

Let's get this right. At 16, you're not old enough to buy a fizzy drink packed with sugar and caffeine, but you are mature enough to decide who runs the country. Utter madness.

■ ■ ■

OVER the weekend, the television news bulletins were questioning whether, 15 years after he was appointed a CBE, that David Beckham had not been upgraded to a knighthood. Could it be down to his tax affairs?

Well, it could be. Then again, it could be down the fact that he hasn't actually achieved anything since then.

PM's awkward moves mirror more trouble for Corbyn

With all the problems being faced by her boss, obviously, Diane Abbott is right by his side?

Theresa May during her dad-dancing session in South Africa...next stop Strictly?

White supremacist David Duke, who has spoken out in praise of Jeremy Corbyn

May dancing on thin ice of acceptability

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

"I HAPPEN to be the oldest woman on television not baking cakes." Anne Robinson, 73, describing herself this week.

WITH Jeremy Corbyn fighting allegations of anti-semitism on a daily basis, you'd expect his old allies to be shouting support from the rooftops. Seriously, has anybody seen Diane Abbott?

I WROTE recently about newspapers slipping into coy mediaeval language (lass, beau, etc) when describing anything sexual. Sure enough, one of this week's reviews of Bodyguard (BBC1), refers to the leading characters having "two steamy trysts." "Tryst" is a favourite tabloid word, along with "romp." I'm not sure if there is any real difference between romping and trysting, although romping always sounds a bit lower-class. The tattooed underclass romp on budget airliners but the gentry have trysts in private jets.

I WISH to report a case of gender appropriation. Images from her African tour show Theresa May indulging in an awkward, stiff-limbed activity her aides call "dancing." It is no such thing. It is, as any father of teenage children can testify, an example of dad-dancing. This is an art form reserved for males of a certain age and is usually accompanied by one's children burying their heads in their hands. Leave it, Theresa. Dad-dancing is for dads.

THE PM's trip to Africa must come as a shock to those Brits raised on endless tales of slavery, blood diamonds and imperial oppression. Surely, the countries of the old British Empire should be lining up to spit in our faces. Truth is, if you actually visit these countries you may be amazed at the goodwill. In Sri Lanka some years ago, an old chap sighed wistfully for the days of British rule and asked me if there was any chance of us returning. In Israel, a former member of a guerilla gang who was imprisoned by the Brits told me: "If you've got to be occupied by anybody, it may as well be the British." There are, of course, disturbing memories of some terrible events. But there is also a surprising amount of friendship. As far as I know, the British Empire is the only empire in the long and savage history of imperial conquest whose former masters and servants meet on a regular basis to play cricket.

WHATEVER possessed the Scottish politician Alex Salmond, on the campaign trail in 1999, to share his Solero ice-cream with a 17-year-old student? It looked awkward back then and today, with the SNP legend accused of sexual harassment, it hardly helps. There is a lesson here for politicians everywhere. You are approached by a young and attractive supporter. Do you a) nod politely, b) shake hands, or c) let them lick your Solero? It's really not that difficult, is it?

THE abiding image from this year's Reading Festival inspired the Daily Star to adopt an oddly mediaeval sort of language that goes with rude bits and embarrassment. As the newspaper put it: "Pics include a lass holding aloft a blow-up penis. A lass? Aloft? Yea, verily, dilly-dilly and juggle my firkins. The inflatable-penis stunt must have seemed a great idea at the time. But then the image goes viral and I'm guessing the girl's family are mortified. It gets worse. These days, thanks to social media, an image is forever. Years from now, in her smartest City outfit, this lass is being interviewed for a dream job. The boss looks up from his computer with a thin smile and asks: "Miss Scroggins, would you describe yourself as impetuous . . ?" And in that awful moment she knows precisely which image he's got on his screen. She is forever the Reading Todger Lass.

DAVID Duke, former Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, has been in the news lately. First, he is a character in the new Spike Lee film, BlacKkK l a n s m a n. Next, he joined that other far right character Nick Griffin last week in praising Jeremy Corbyn's alleged – and strongly denied – comments on Zionists. In all my years in this job, involving thousands of interviewees from princes right through to paupers, I met only two men whom I knew were close to evil but who came across as polite, engaging and disturbingly charming. One was Gerry Adams. The other was David Duke.

IF you ask people how they feel about food prices rising by £7 a month because of the long, hot summer, they'll say it's a diabolical liberty and a national disgrace. Ask those same people if they'd cheerfully pay £7 a month for a glorious long, dry summer that begins in May and lasts until September and they'll whip out their cheque books in no time. It's all about how you ask the question.

FOR younger readers, a cheque book is, er, well, it really doesn't matter. Soon they will all be gone.

TALKING POINT

Substance use is no laughing matter . . .

MANY people will have noticed the plethora of innocuous looking small silver canisters littering parks, wasteground and streets.

Some people may know they are nitrous oxide gas canisters – also known as laughing gas or hippy crack.

But how many people realise how widespread the use of the canisters and 'balloons' is becoming, predictably among young people, or how deadly they can be?

Laughing gas seems fun, a harmless puff of light entertainment. But what these canisters actually do is replace oxygen in the lungs with nitrous oxide. How can that be harmless?

The effects of laughing gas include a brief feeling of euphoria but also dizziness, impaired judgment and even hallucinations. However the potential long-term damage due to the oxygen in the lungs being replaced with nitrous oxide can be a heart attack, severe brain damage or even death.

The Daily Mail recently carried the tragic story of a 24-year-old mother who had been left paralysed by inhaling laughing gas at weekends. It caused Lichtheim's disease, a degeneration of the spinal cord, and Olivia Golding can no longer walk or play with her three-year-old boy. The pictures were heart-breaking. Yet these canisters are freely available on line for just a few pence – pocket money in fact. Which is part of the problem.

Young people and even children are buying them. Perhaps they assume they are legal and, as they are becoming so widely used, harmless.

In fact nitrous oxide is covered under the The Psychoactive Substances Act of 2016 which previously tackled illegal highs. It is illegal to be used for human consumption but does have legitimate uses, including medicinal use such as in childbirth and in catering to whip cream and make frothy coffee.

Let's face it, the 'yoooth' of the day will always want to be a little rebellious, to be cool, to experiment and will also cave in to peer pressure. We've all been there.

Sadly the dangers of 'laughing gas' are not well known. How many mothers have sat their children down and warned about inhaling laughing gas? Well now is the time.

The worrying amount of canisters being dumped shows how widespread this trend is becoming and I fear it will take more tragic deaths to realistically raise the profile of this deadly gas and its dangers. Don't let your child, sister or friend be one of those unfortunate victims sacrificed before the message gets through.

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Hard-up families need free buses

THE first duty of local and regional government should be to defend the interests of the poor and not the rich elite, like them, who can well look after themselves.

Instead, these councillors, MPs and MEPs see their top priority is to provide prestigious, grossly extravagant and wasteful Metro tram and Sprint bus schemes on the back of the billions going into HS2.

These people see their top priority to provide free car parking for two hours at council car parks. Low income families do not have cars.

Our local and regional politicians see another top priority is to spend many hundreds of millions of pounds on expensive tram extensions and Sprint buses.

Low income families need existing buses that have free fares. Over 60s like me have had them for over ten years. The money from scrapping tram extensions and Sprint buses should be used to give everyone free bus travel with bus lanes and traffic light priority to speed them on their way.

TIM WELLER
Halesowen

Badge can be a lifeline for parents

WITH reference to the the letter from Robert W White re the Blue Badge. My youngest son is autistic and doesn't have a Blue Badge because of Government cuts when they moved the goalposts again.

Autism does very much need a Blue Badge for when the child has sensory overload they can be out of control. My Autistic son is now 6ft and 19 and in many ways is quite childlike and has no danger awareness. The need to be as close to the shop or whatever we are visiting is vital.

My son doesn't have a badge but as soon as they make them available I will be applying. The stress levels for the parents also must be considered. Some people have more than one autistic child and this is a lifeline.

AUDRA PERKINS
Wordsley

Working shoppers miss out

A shopkeeper spent over £1,500 on cans of beer, etc, that was on offer at a well-known supermarket, to sell on leaving the shelves bare.

This always happens. People who shop after work have not got a chance. These greedy people are rubbing their hands at our expense and it shouldn't be allowed.

It's time to speak out and let them know your concerns.

JUDITH FISHER
Tividale

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL
dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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It's bananas!

IT is claimed that fruit and vegetable prices will rise but if the public would accept carrots, cucumbers, potatoes and tomatoes that are not perfectly shaped – instead of two million tonnes going to landfill each year – there would be no shortages or price increases. People demand vegetables that are perfect and then cut them up. What does shape matter then?

NAME AND ADDRESS SUPPLIED

Puzzled by bus number changes

WHAT do the National Express bus company think they are gaining by altering bus route numbers?

Easy example, they are changing number 13 to number 11A. Easy solution, just fiddle with the controls on the front of the buses.

But what about the multitude of bus stops? All are being altered, at a cost.

And what has happened to the fleet of 'special' buses, that they purchased and painted green to run on the Number 1 route from Dudley to Tettenhall Green?

All buses being used at present are old diesel, red ones. Is this a saving, and helping pollution as the green buses were intended to?

PETER COLE
Kingswinford

Autism and badge parking

IN reply to comments regarding Blue Badges been given to sufferers of autism. My five-year-old grandson suffers from autism and after brain surgery last year to relieve seizures is now partially sighted. He is unable to walk far unassisted. Mr White wonders why SUVs are parked in disabled bays. In my daughter's case this is so she can fit my grandson's specialised large pushchair into her car.

MARIE PICKERING
Halesowen

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Supporting children's hospital brick by brick

A LEGO-THEMED event in the Black Country helped to raise thousands of pounds for a children's hospital.

The Black Country Brick Show 2018 saw master Lego builders travelling from all parts of the UK for the event at Brierley Hill Civic Hall. The show included stalls, games and activities and it raised £2,500 for Birmingham Children's Hospital.

There were around 25 displays including everything from a working rollercoaster, to a Lego city, as well as Batman and Toy Story themes.

Event organiser Paul Clark said: "We had around 800 people through the door during the day which was great as it was the first event we have held.

Hearts

"We chose to raise funds for Birmingham Children's Hospital because it is local, it is a cause close to everyone's hearts – I have friends who have used that hospital – and also it was a children's show so where better for the money to go.

"We had displays from all across the UK, people travelled from Portsmouth to Wakefield to the Black Country to exhibit at the show.

"We had people selling Lego and Star Wars cosplayers. Children were racing Lego cars down a ramp and there was also a Robot Wars-type activity with Lego.

"We are hoping to return with the event again next year."

A town hall made entirely from Lego on display at Brierley Hill Civic Hall

Alan Story, of Stevenage, with Lego murals of Audrey Hepburn and Marilyn Monroe

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More children are being exploited by drug gangs

Tyler a game grappler

Dudley-born wrestler Tyler Bate as he appears in WWE 2K19

A RISING star wrestler from Dudley has been added to the World Wrestling Entertainment's (WWE) latest edition of a video game.

Netherton 21-year-old Tyler Bate has been recreated in digital form for WWE 2K19, the latest instalment in the annual video game series by the wrestling organisation.

As one half of tag team 'Moustache Mountain', regulars in the WWE's UK brand NXT, Bate has been added to the game in advance of its upcoming release, alongside Chelmsley Wood's Pete Dunne.

Bate said: "In such a short time in WWE I have experienced so many incredible moments, becoming the first ever WWE United Kingdom Champion, NXT Tag Team Champion and now I can add being featured in WWE 2K19 to that list."

'I'D urge parents to know where their children are, engage with them and look out for new items they may bring home such as phones, clothes or money.'

A warning to families from a Black Country police sergeant as a new wave of child exploitation is emerging across the West Midlands. Children as young as 12 are being groomed to work as drug mules by dealers in almost 100 gang operations in the West Midlands.

Dudley-based Sergeant Cliff Tomkinson says he is aware of some children who have been targeted by drug gangs as part of criminal activity known as County Lines.

In the West Midlands there are an estimated 90 of the operations, which involve children carrying out street deals on behalf of drug gangs looking to expand networks across the region.

The youths are often left to operate from a stranger's house taken over by the gang – a practice known as cuckooing. The use of juveniles, Sgt Tomkinson says, is to evade police attention.

Trafficking

The warning comes as figures published last week show the number of children referred for human trafficking and slavery has almost doubled across the Black Country and Staffordshire. They show child referrals for the first six months of this year by Wolverhampton council totalled 18. Sandwell Council referred 17, Walsall 12, Staffordshire six and Dudley two.

Sgt Tomkinson said: "It's distressing to think this is taking place. The children are chosen because they are less likely to be identified and the drug dealer cannot afford to be caught."

He added: "We need to look out for our young people, ensure they are safe and do not fall into the such traps."

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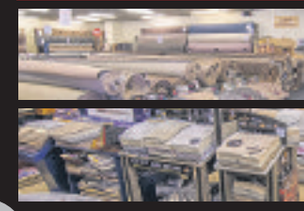

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Drunken ex smashed up former partner's TV with a hammer

A JILTED father-of-two went on terrifying drunken wrecking sprees at the Stourbridge home of his former partner.

The pair had split up and Sean Payne was banned from having any contact with the woman after beating her up on March 27 last year but repeatedly broke the restraining order this summer, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

The victim heard the sound of breaking glass at her Shenstone Road home and found the lounge window had been smashed shortly after midnight on June 20. She saw the 23-year-old defendant running away.

Payne struck again late at night ten days later when he followed her and a man into the house in an effort to talk to her but when that failed he angrily snatched up a hammer that was lying nearby.

Detox

Mr Matthew Brook, prosecuting, said the defendant, who had a drink problem, accidentally hit her on the side, throwing the hammer with which he smashed a new £500 TV. He handed himself in to police on July 10.

Mr Oliver Woolhouse, defending,- said: "He has been struggling with alcohol addiction and this led to them splitting up. He has been through seven weeks of detox after being held in custody following his arrest.

"Drink has been the trigger and, if he can stay away from it with the help of probation and other services, his offending will end."

Payne, of The Broadway, Norton, admitted harassment, criminal damage and breaching the restraining order. He was given a ten-month jail term suspended for two years plus 200 hours of unpaid work. He was told to pay £140 compensation and the restraining order was extended.

Cash machine blown apart by thieves

TWO men blew up a cash machine outside a Cradley shop, stealing hundreds of pounds in the early hours.

They targeted the cashpoint outside the Nisa store in Colley Gate,using a gas bottle to detonate the machine before stealing the cash from inside the wrecked machine. The pair then fled the scene in a white car towards Lye.

The latest incident marks the second time the Nisa store has been targeted by criminals in a fortnight.

West Midlands Police has now launched an investigation following the theft, which is believed to have taken place at around 2.30am on Friday.

The cash machine has since been boarded up.

Andrew Newton, who has been manager of the Nisa store for the last four years, said the crooks were seen on CCTV to move out of the way of the machine before they detonated the gas.

The 41-year-old said: "It was about half past two in the morning. It was a white Fiesta that pulled up outside. They got a gas bottle out and it stood around about chest height.

"They linked it to the cash machine and pumped it with gas and promptly blew it up. It was obviously very dangerous. They moved out of the way before the gas was detonated. There was a bit of fire.

"I do not think they got much money really – it was in the hundreds."

Blown up – the wrecked cash machine outside a supermarket in Cradley

Food bank in appeal for more supplies

STOCK levels are 'critically low' at the Black Country Foodbank, which has launched an urgent appeal for donations.

It comes amid a growing demand for three-day emergency food supplies as more people struggle to make ends meet.

The charity provided a total of 182,000 meals between April 2017 to March 2018. Of thes, 60,020 were for children, an increase of five per cent on the previous year.

More than 6,750 children are expected to have been fed by the food bank during the six-week school summer holidays.

The increase in people seeking help has left supplies low and the charity is now appealing for schools, churches and other organisations to support them with their traditional harvest time events. See www.blackcountryfoodbank.org.uk website.

Ten in Dudley die waiting for a transplant

SEVENTY-TWO people from the Black Country and Staffordshire have died while waiting for an organ transplant in the last five years – including ten from Dudley.

The shocking statistics have been revealed today by NHS Blood and Transplant in a desperate bid to get more donors during Organ Donation Week.

NHS Blood and Transplant says that although the number of donors is increasing and the waiting lists are reducing, 6,000 patients in the UK are currently hoping for a transplant. More people in the West Midlands are being urged to join the register.

Nationally, around three people a day died in need of an organ.

Emma Lawson, a specialist nurse organ donation team manager, who covers hospitals in the West Midlands, said: "It's tragic so many people from the West Midlands have died waiting for a transplant. What is shocking is that many of those lives could have been saved, had more families agreed to donate organs. People are dying every day because some families are not talking about donation.

""We don't want people to die because of a fatal complacency, that because you know you want to be an organ donor you presume your loved ones know it too. Please, let your family know your decision and ask them if they want to be donors."

Car hit street light

A CAR crashed into a lamp post outside a row of shops in the Black Country, smashing plant pots. The red SEAT was embedded in the lamp post after the crash in Colley Gate on Saturday night. Emergency services were sent to the scene but it is believed noone was badly hurt. The crash took place outside Chainmakers Fish and Chip shop and the Nisa Local.

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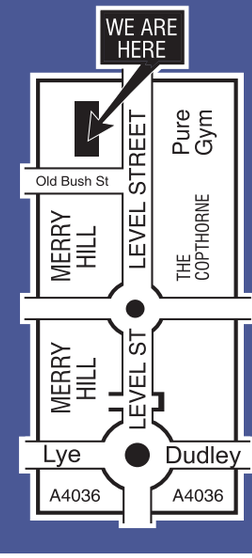

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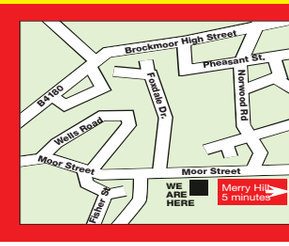

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Crash driver guilty of killing grandfather

A 20-YEAR-OLD woman has been convicted of causing the death of a grandfather by careless driving and warned not to assume she will avoid jail.

Emily Doyle-Gibbons was driving her Ford Fiesta when she lost control and careered across the carriageway into Malcolm Aplin's Vauxhall Corsa.

The 59-year-old care home owner, from Tettenhall, who leaves behind five children and five grandchildren, went into cardiac arrest after suffering 'catastrophic ' injuries in the head-on smash at Port Lane between Codsall and Brewood around 4.15pm on June 25 last year.

Doyle-Gibbons was found guilty by a 10-2 majority verdict and told by Judge James Burbidge QC, who adjourned sentencing until September 24: "Do not take it into your mind that you will avoid a custodial sentence. I shall keep an open mind."

Blame

She was given an immediate driving ban. Mr Paul Spratt, prosecuting, told the jury during the Wolverhampton Crown Court trial that the collision was caused by her inattention. He said: "She drove across the carriageway and collided with Mr Aplin."

Eye-witness Michael Hayward said in a statement:"The collision was caused as a result of the silver car [Ford Fiesta] travelling towards me, being in the wrong lane. The car in front of me [Vauxhall Corsa] was totally not to blame."

The defendant, of Warren Drive, Dudley, tried to blame a defect with her car's shock absorber, which was leaking fluid, for the fatal collision, but Mr Spratt maintained this was 'not responsible or a significant contributor'.

The defendant had been driving at up to the 60mph limit on her way to meet a friend for a pub meal and denied being distracted. She was running late, the court heard.

Holly hoppy to be home

Three-year-old Holly spent more than a fortnight on the loose

FOR more than two weeks she hopped around the countryside near Halfpenny Green by herself, but now three-year-old wallaby Holly is home.

Bosses at WILD Zoological Park at Bobbington confirmed the wallaby had been captured and had received treatment after being struck a glancing blow by a van.

Holly escaped from the park next to the Tom Lane vineyards on August 14.

A spokesperson from the zoo said: "All our staff are very happy to have Holly home. We're making sure she's as comfortable as she can be. We are very grateful to the driver of the van who didn't hesitate to take her to a veterinarian. Her only open wound, below her ear, has been treated and patched up."

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Veteran electrician left homes in a dangerous condition

A BUNGLING electrician, who had not updated his skills for around 40 years, left the homes of his customers in a dangerous condition, a judge heard.

Alan Riley boasted of his 35 years experience in an advert but failed to mention he was not registered to any official body and the last time that he had a valid qualification was in the 1970s.

Wolverhampton Crown Court was told that work done by the 65-year-old grandfather at two addresses was sub standard and 'dangerous'.

The defendant was chosen to fit lights, sockets and a fuse board at a house in Commonside, Pensnett, after he quoted £850 in January 2017.

Riley was paid £600 but £250 was withheld because the ceiling had been damaged when the lights were installed. Then the couple discovered the electrician had left bare cable, cut earth wires, broken sockets and put in a fuse board with a vital part missing, said Mr Alexander Barnfield, prosecuting. It cost them £434 to have the faults corrected.

Warrant

Dudley Council got a warrant to search Riley's property on November 17 and found a list of addresses where he worked. They checked and discovered the defendant had also installed a faulty fuse board at a house in Chiltern Road, Amblecote.

Mr Stephen Hamblett, defending, said: He had a career of over 30 years without complaint until this happened. He qualified a long time ago but has not kept pace with the changing standards."

Riley from Osberton Drive, Dudley, who has now retired, was given an 18 month conditional discharge and ordered to pay £664 compensation and £1,800 towards the costs of the case.

Figures show longer wait to see the GP

NEARLY one in four people in Dudley face a week-long wait before they can see a GP, according to the annual NHS GP survey. The figure of 23 per cent has increased from 14 per cent.

The appointment figures are worse in South Staffordshire (25 per cent) but slightly better in Wolverhampton (20 per cent, or one in five people) and Sandwell (19 per cent).

The statistics were met with concern at the Royal College of GPs, where chair Professor Helen Stokes-Lampard, said: "Patients are still waiting too long for a GP appointment, and too many are not getting an appointment when they want one.It means patients might not be getting the treatment they need in the early stages of their condition and their conditions will potentially become more serious."

Criminals pay for force's new eye in the sky

Not a scene from The Terminator, it's the police's new DJI Matrice 210 taking off to watch the streets

IT looks like something from a science fiction movie but it's West Midlands Police's latest weapon against crime.

The force's newest drone, the DJI Matrice 210, can zoom in and record car registration numbers from high in the sky.

The black quadcopter, paid for by money seized from criminals, is capable of flying in all weather conditions. The gadget can fly at speeds of 51mph.

A total of £28,000 has funded three drones and training for seven remote control pilots. The money is raised from assets seized from convicted criminals by the Proceeds of Crime Act Asset Recovery Funding.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson welcomed the drones, saying: "They can go where officers can't."

Police will be checking driver vision

EVERY motorist stopped by roads police officers in the West Midlands during September will be required to take eye tests.

A police crackdown on drivers with defective eyesight has been launched and every motorist stopped by roads police officers will be required to read a number plate from 20 metres.

Anyone who fails will have their driving licence immediately revoked.

Data from the tests will be used to improve understanding of the extent of poor driver vision. The initiative is also being run by forces in Thames Valley and Hampshire, and is supported by road safety charity Brake and optician firm Vision Express.

Sergeant Rob Heard, representing the forces taking part in the campaign, said: "Not being able to see a hazard or react to a situation quickly enough can have catastrophic consequences."

He warned that officers will be carrying out eyesight checks "at every opportunity".

Under current rules, the only mandatory examination of vision takes place during the practical test, when learners must read a number plate from 20 metres. Once someone has obtained their licence, it is up to them to tell the DVLA if they have a problem with their eyesight.

Three stabbed in rail station fight

THREE men suffered stab wounds when a fight erupted outside a railway station.

The brawl, believed to have involved at least six men, broke out in Station Drive, outside Kidderminster railway station on Saturday at around 10pm. The injured men, all aged in their 20s, were taken to hospital.

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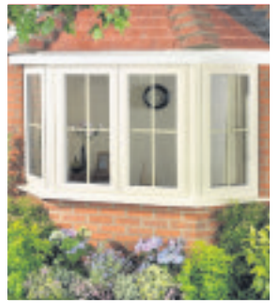
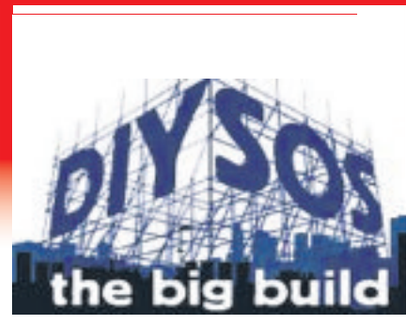

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This half would then NOT be included in any future means test calculations for care fees. The surviving spouse is free to sell their share of the home, raise cash or move house. Your children are powerless to intervene but simply have to wait for their inheritance, as they would have done previously.

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Oh, What a night! You will be Beggin' for more

REVIEW: Jersey Boys, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre
By Alison Norton

THE audience was left Beggin' for more as the latest UK tour of Jersey Boys took the Grand Theatre by storm.

Having won 57 major awards worldwide, the show has an impressive history and it is no wonder that audiences across the country are still flocking to enjoy hit after hit in the tale of this sensational 60s group from the wrong side of the tracks.

Essentially a jukebox musical, the storyline is of course factual, so the show has far more depth than its counterparts, allowing the cast to really get to grips with the characterisations of the band members and give the audience an insight into life in the rough and tough world of New Jersey.

Jersey Boys cast Declan Egan, Michael Watson, Simon Bailey and Lewis Griffiths

Unforgettable

Those of you who don't know much about the Four Seasons may be shocked and surprised by their somewhat dubious existence.

Far from being the boys next door, these were true New Jersey lads, all of whom spent some time inside, making it difficult to perform and record. However, their collaboration resulted in huge hits such as Big Girls Don't Cry, Sherry, Walk Like a Man and My Eyes Adored You.

In Act One as the storyline developed, we enjoyed some of the group's lesser known songs including Cry for Me, I'm in the Mood for Love and Sunday Kind of Love, all of which were equally appealing. It would be unfair to choose between the four leading men, as each one is perfectly cast, but a conversation heard on the way out of the theatre confirmed my thoughts that James Alexander Gibbs had done an impeccable job of portraying Frankie Valli, certainly in terms of his unforgettable falsetto vocals, but also his warm, charismatic personality which gushed over the floodlights.

FrankieValli knew personal tragedy as well as fame and fortune and Gibbs' interpretation of Fallen Angel, a song remembering his deceased daughter, was heart-wrenching but beautifully delivered. Another highlight was his performance of My Mother's Eyes, but for me, the delivery of arguably the Four Seasons' most famous tune, Can't Take My Eyes Off You, completely stole the show.

Simon Bailey as the band's founder, Tommy DeVito, was arrogant and shady; the perfect strutting Italian Stallion. He gave outstanding characterisation and an excellent vocal performance.

Declan Egan as Bob Gaudio, the songwriter behind many of the band's major hits, offered a solid, suave performance, while the charming Lewis Griffiths had the humour, appeal and superb bass voice of Nick Massi.

The ladies in the cast were not to be outdone, including a feisty, full-blooded portrayal of Valli's long suffering wife Mary by Tara Young and a great rendition of My Boyfriend's Back from the girls playing The Angels.

The show just oozed class and professionalism.

Jersey Boys runs until Saturday.

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Kaiser Chiefs singer Ricky Wilson leads from the front at Wolverhampton Racecourse

Kaisers have a riot in racecourse date

Kaiser Chiefs
Wolverhampton Racecourse
By Rebecca Stanley

A HAPPY mob of music fans trotted off to Wolverhampton Racecourse to witness the riot that is Kaiser Chiefs – and they were not disappointed.

Following an afternoon of racing at Dunstall Park, the Leeds quartet took to the outdoor stage to deliver an hour-plus set full of scorching hits and electric energy.

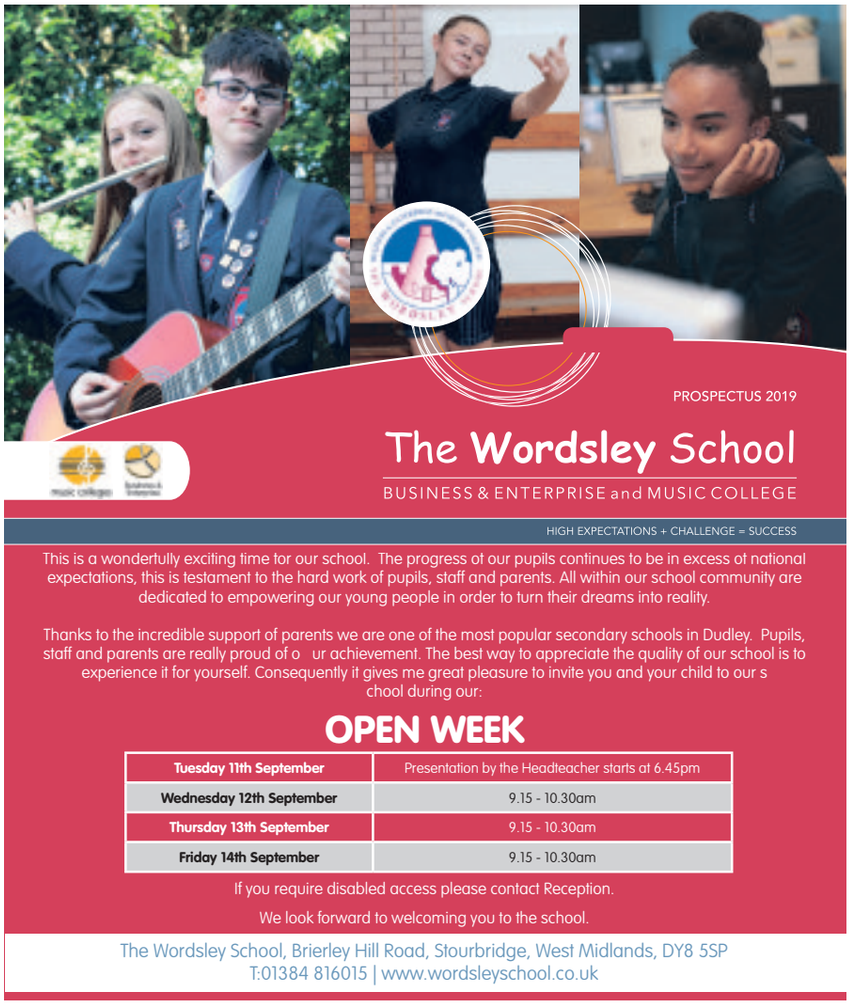
The 2005 hit Everyday I Love You Less And Less was first out of the stalls, followed by a string of well-known songs such as I Predict a Riot, Everything Is Average Nowadays, Modern Way and the infectious Ruby. The audience sang along to the anthemic choruses, and danced to the soaring guitar hooks and rolling drum beats. Leading from the front was the enigmatic Ricky Wilson. The 40-year-old rocker had the full attention of the entire audience.

"That's a good start Wolverhampton, but we can do better than that," The former The Voice judge shouted, urging the crowd to raise their arms and clap – which they did with heaps of enthusiasm.

Ricky wasted no time in clambering onto the drum kit, furiously headbanging. His passion for the music spilled over into the audience, creating an electric atmosphere. The band's eclectic set featured a variety of songs from their back catalogue, from early hits such as Modern Way and The Angry Mob through to newer hits Ruffians On Parade and Misery Company.

The band treated fans to a raging cover of The Who's Pinball Wizard, before playing brand new track People Know How To Love Each Other.

As Ricky threw streamers over the crowd, breathless revellers in suits and posh frocks began to leave the venue – with smiles from pillar to post.



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Mon. 17 Sept.19.00-20.30. 1 wk. *FREE*

ITALIAN FOR BEGINNERS
Mon. 17 Sept.18.00-19.30. 1 wk. *FREE*

DANCE FIT
Tues.18 Sept. 18.00-19.30. 1 wk. *FREE*

LOW IMPACT AEROBICS
Thurs.13 Sept. 18.00-19.00. 1 wk. *FREE*

COMPUTER COURSES
(Basic computer and internet skills are required)

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Mon. 17 Sept. 09.30-11.30. 6 wks. £45.60#

PHOTOSHOP 2
Mon. 05 Nov. 09.30-11.30. 6 wks. £45.60#

INTRODUCTION TO EXCEL SPREADSHEETS
Mon. 17 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 5 wks. £38.00#

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Tues.18 Sept. 09.30-11.30. 4 wks. £30.40#

AN INTRODUCTION TO IPAD
Tues. 23 Oct. 09.30-11.30. 1 wks. £7.60#

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR IPAD
Tues. 06 Nov. 09.30-11.30. 3 wks. £22.80#

MASTERING YOUR IPAD
Tues. 27 Nov. 09.30-11.30. 3 wks. £22.80#

BASIC COMPUTER COURSES

COMPUTERS: THE BASICS
Mon. 17 Sept. 14.30-16.30. 3 wks. £22.80#
Mon. 17 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 3 wks. £22.80#

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Mon. 08 Oct. 19.00-21.00. 3 wks. £22.80#
Mon. 08 Oct. 14.30-16.30. 3 wks. £22.80#

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Thurs. 27 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 5 wks. £38.00#

INTRODUCTION TO CREATING PRESENTATIONS WITH POWERPOINT
Thurs. 08 Nov. 19.00-21.00. 5 wks. £38.00#

LANGUAGES

FRENCH
Improvers: Mon. 17 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 12 wks. £82.80#
Intermediates:Tues. 18 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 12 wks. £82.80#
NEWBeg: Thurs. 20 Sept. 18.00-19.00. 12 wks. £45.60#
Advanced: Thurs. 20 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 12 wks. £82.80#

ITALIAN
NEW:Beg: Mon. 24 Sept. 09.30-11.30. 11 wks. £75.90#
Beginners: Mon. 24 Sept. 18.00-19.30. 11 wks. £62.70#
Improvers: Mon. 17 Sept. 14.30-16.00. 12 wks. £68.40#
Intermediates: Mon. 17 Sept. 12.00-14.00. 12 wks. £82.80#

SPANISH
NEWBeg: Mon. 24 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 10 wks. £69.00#
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Intermediates: Wed.19 Sept. 09.30-11.00. 12 wks. £68.40#
Improvers: Wed. 19 Sept. 11.30-13.00. 12 wks. £68.40#
Advanced: Wed. 19 Sept. 14.00-15.30. 12 wks. £68.40#
Cont Beg: Tues.18 Sept 12.30-14.00. 12 wks. £68.40#
NEW Beg: Thurs 20 Sept. 12.30-14.00. 12 wks. £68.40#

PORTUGESE
Beginners Mon 17 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 10 wks. £69.00#

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Mon. 24 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 5 wks. £38.00#

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Thurs. 20 Sept. 10.00-12.00. 12 wks. £82.80#
Thurs. 20 Sept. 13.30-15.30. 12 wks. £82.80#

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Thurs. 27 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 10 wks. £69.00#

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Sat. 29 Sept. 10.00-12.00. 9 wks. £83.40#
Sat. 29 Sept. 12.30-14.30. 9 wks. £83.40#

HEALTH AND FITNESS

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Thurs 20 Sept.18.00-19.00. 12 wks. £45.60#

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Improvers: Tues.18 Sept. 19.00-20.00. 12 wks. £45.60
Improvers: Wed.12 Sept. 18.30-19.30. 13 wks. £49.40
Improvers: Thurs.13 Sept.19.05-20.05. 13 wks. £49.40
Improvers: Thurs.13 Sept. 20.10-21.10. 13 wks. £49.40
Beginners @ The Oakfield Centre:
Fri. 14 Sept.10.00-11.00. 13 wks. £54.60#
Fri. 14 Sept.11.15-12.15. 13 wks. £54.60#

FITNESS YOGA
Tues. 18 Sept.20.05-21.05. 12 wks. £45.60

ADULT SWIMMING LESSONS:
Beginners: Mon. 10 Sept. 19.00-19.45. 13 wks. £54.60#
Beginners: Tues. 18 Sept. 19.00-19.45. 12 wks. £37.80#
Improvers: Mon. 10 Sept. 19.45-20.30. 13 wks. £54.60#
Advanced: Mon. 10 Sept. 20.30-21.15. 13 wks. £54.60#

DANCE FIT
Tues. 25 Sept. 18.00-19.00. 11 wks. £41.80

MUSIC

PLAY THE GUITAR
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Intermediates:Thurs 20 Sept. 19.00-20.30. 12 wks. £68.40#
Advanced: Mon. 17 Sept. 19.00-21.00. 12 wks. £82.80#

PRIVATE GUITAR LESSONS
Beginners: Mon. 17 Sept. 17.05-17.35. 6 wks. *****
Beginners: Mon. 17 Sept. 17.40-18.10. 6 wks. *****
Beginners: Mon. 17 Sept. 18.15-18.45. 6 wks. *****
Beginners: Thurs. 20 Sept.17.05-17.35. 6 wks. *****
Beginners: Thurs. 20 Sept.17.40-18.10. 6 wks. *****
Beginners: Thurs. 20 Sept.18.15-18.45. 6 wks. *****
*** Please contact Student Services for prices

HANDICRAFTS

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NEW Mon. 17 Sept.19.00-21.00. 6 wks. £45.60#
Tues. 18 Sept. 12.00-14.00. 12 wks. £82.80#

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This programme is subject to change: particularly if we are unable to recruit minimum class numbers. Whilst every effort is made to ensure that this programme and the pricing is accurate at the time of publication, changes and errors may occur. We reserve the right to amend details as required.

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Thurs. 20 Sept.19.30-20.30. 6 wks. £22.80#
Thurs. 08 Nov. 19.30-20.30. 6 wks. £22.80#

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ADULT SWIMMING: Mon. 12.45-13.30 £4.00
Thurs.19.00-19.45. £4.00

AQUAFIT: Wed. 12.15 –13.00, Fri.12.15-13.00. £4.00.
Wed.19.00-19.45, Sun. 9.00-9.45. £5.00.

FITNESS SWIM: for 10-19 yrs olds Mon. 18.00-18.45. £3.00

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Dan's the man for soulful tunes

If you like George Ezra, Paolo Nutini or Jack Savoretti, check out Shrewsbury singer-songwriter Dan Owen, whose debut album, Stay Awake With Me, reveals a major new talent with a soulful voice.

Dan says of his new release: "I like to think of it as a collection of personal stories and experiences. I feel like this is what I have been working for since I first picked up a guitar at eight years old. A lot has happened since then and these songs cover some of the high and low points for me and those closest to me."

He is certainly entering a crowded market, the success of Ezra, Ed Sheeran, James Bay and the like, means there is no shortage of mellow-voiced sensitive souls who strum guitar. His debut follows a well worn path with its use of gospel choir and uplifting strings but songs such as What Is A Man and Splinter show lots of promise. Icarus and Hideaway have already garnered attention, the former making the Radio 2 playlist and the latter Radio 1.

Dan's a man with plenty of potential and can build on this debut. After supporting Isaac Gracie and playing festivals, he plays Birmingham's Castle & Falcon, Moseley Road, on October 13 and has a home town gig at the Theatre Severn on November 16.

Meanwhile, Wolverhampton singer-songwriter Scott Matthews, whose latest album is The Great Untold, has nearly sold out his home city gig at the Newhampton Arts Centre on September 28.

Have a go at falconry at the Midland Game Fair

Escape to the country

THE Midland Game Fair returns to Weston Park this month, offering a host of country-themed events, activities and demonstrations, adding up to a great day out for all the family.

The line up in the main arena will include performances by The Knights of Middle England, Ye Olde Redtail Falconry, as well as musical from the Coventry Corps of Drums and a traditional Hound Parade.

At the Midland Game Fair, over the weekend of September 15 and 16, there will be musical entertainment including the popular Folk Roots Festival across three stages.

There is also a Food Festival and the Beer in the Park area in which to take a break from visiting more than 700 trade stands selling countryside clothes and accessories

Traditional country pursuits will include displays by master netsman Brin Brinded and there will also be an opportunity to try the Survival Camp with ex-SAS Soldier Bob Podesta.

There's the Prince Albert Angling Fishing Village, a Working Dog Village, Falconry Village and enthusiasts can enjoy a festival showcasing of shooting sports.

The event organised by Countryman Fairs features the finals of the Chudleys Gundog Championship, BASC Clay Shooting and BFTA European Field Target Championships.

To discover more about this year's event or book tickets (under-16s go free with a full paying adult) visit www.midlandgamefair.co.uk website.

Spike is Goon but not forgotten

The first ever UK tour of the classic radio comedy The Goon Show visits Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre on September 18.

In 1951 the landscape of British comedy changed dramatically when The Goon Show burst onto the airwaves of the BBC Home Service. Spike Milligan, Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe and, in the early days, Michael Bentine brought a brand of surreal humour unlike anything that had been heard before and revolutionised comedy.

With its bizarre characters, fantastical plots and running jokes, The Goon Show captured the imagination of the British public and made household names of its three main stars, all of whom would go on to achieve fame.

Now in Goon Show creator Spike Milligan's centenary year, Apollo Theatre Company, who recently produced the 50th anniversary tour of another classic radio comedy, Round the Horne, have teamed up with Spike Milligan Productions to bring the show to the stage for the first time.

Producer, Norma Farnes, Spike's assistant and manager for 36 years, says: "There is no better time than the centenary of Spike's birth to celebrate his most enduring creation. Spike's sense of the absurd created a whole new form of comedy which fuelled everyone's imagination and still does today."

Brimming wit and surreal humour, The Goon Show promises to be a must-see for classic comedy fans.

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

MUSICAL TREATS IN THE NEW WELLINGTON

Musical fans from across the region are rubbing their hands together for a musical extravaganza with Live Entertainment Friday and Saturday Night.

The New Wellington in Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill, is not only treating its patrons to great entertainment it is also a great place to eat, drink and socialise.

Set on the main Stourbridge to Dudley Road, not far off Brierley Hill high street, the venue offers a carvery all day everyday from 12 noon to 8pm with a selected main menu from 5pm. With Kids eating Free throughout the school holidays. T's & C's apply

For the early started amongst us they also offer a buffet style all you can eat breakfast from 8am to 11am, which has been brought back by popular demand.

The New Wellington also offers a Disco and Karaoke every Friday night, So why not come down and have a sing along!!

New to 2018 - 9 newly refurbished rooms for accommodation, so also now offer B&B at very competitive prices.

Call direct or book online for price and availability.

The New Wellington, 383 Brettell Lane,
Brierley Hill, DY5 3LO
01384 76066

Rebus returns with a new case at Birmingham Rep

Charles Lawson

Scottish detective John Rebus is being brought to the stage when the latest story in the popular crime series gets its world première at Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

Ian Rankin's Edinburgh-set Rebus novels have dominated the detective fiction scene for decades with the subsequent television series ensuring the detective's legendary status. Now, alongside award-winning playwright Rona Munro, Rankin brings his beloved creation to the stage for the first time.

Rebus: Long Shadows finds the former detective inspector living in retirement and trying to keep off the booze but his past life won't let him be, and when the daughter of a murder victim appears outside his flat, he's back on the case.

Taking on the role made famous on television by John Hannah and later by Ken Stott is Charles Lawson, best known for playing Jim McDonald in Coronation Street. Alongside Lawson will be John Stahl (from Game of Thrones) as Big Ger Cafferty and Cathy Tyson (Band of Gold/Grange Hill) as DI Siobhan Clarke.

The play, directed by Robin Lefevre, will be staged at Birmingham Rep from September 20 to October 6 before touring.

Cinders will Wiggle Wine to the ball with Donchez

Britain's Got Talent star Donchez Dacres wiggled his way into the hearts of the nation with his catchy Wiggle Wine song.

Now Wolverhampton-based Donchez will wiggle his way to the ball as he stars in a charity pantomime in the Black Country later this year.

The 61-year-old singing AA man will be joining the cast of Cinderella, the Mary Stevens Hospice's annual pantomime at Stourbridge Town Hall in November.

Amanda Bowen, deputy head of fundraising and lottery at the Stourbridge-based hospice, said: "Much like the rest of the nation, we were wiggling and wining from the moment he appeared on our screens and we could not be more thrilled that he's joined the cast for this show.

"Community is at the heart of everything we do here at the charity, and to be able to let our supporters know that a performer of his calibre will be on hand to entertain them in support of the families relying on our care is just such a special thing to be able to do."

Cinderella will run for five shows at the town hall, between November 28 and 30. For tickets, call 01384 377778 or visit www.seaty.co.uk/cinderella website.

It is the second show organised by the hospice, after their production of the Wizard of Oz sold out in January with X Factor star Wagner as the Wizard.

Wiggle Wine with Donchez

Cooking up a treat in ruins of Ludlow Castle

This weekend marks the 24th Ludlow Food Festival and the line-up mixes renowned chefs and food writers with more than 180 producers from across the Marches area.

There will be tasting, talks, demonstrations and more at the festival, which starts tomorrow (Friday) and continues to Sunday. Organisers have secured some big names for this year including Thomasina Miers, founder of Wahaca, and Brad Carter from the Michelin-starred Carters of Moseley, a regular on TV's Saturday Kitchen. There is also strong representation from chefs local to the Welsh border counties.

Italy-based Rachel Roddy, acclaimed for both her cookbooks and her regular Guardian column, will also be appearing at Ludlow, as will Great British Bake Off's Howard Middleton and Sandy Docherty, plus rugby star turned Celebrity Masterchef winner Phil Vickery.

The festival is one of the town's biggest events, regularly attracting more than 15,000 people to the grounds of Ludlow Castle across three days. For details visit www.ludlowfoodfestival.co.uk website.

Punk's not dead, it's just Idles at the moment

Bristol band Idles are fast getting a reputation as the best new punk band in a generation. The high-energy five-piece outfit will come to Birmingham next month as part of their Tour of Joy, following the release last week of their incendiary second album, Joy as an Act of Resistance.

It's hard to imagine a more volatile mosh pit than that which will greet such tracks as Rottweiler and Danny Nedelko, the latter a punk anthem on a par with Babylon's Burning (The Ruts) and White Riot (The Clash). Singer Joe Talbot is a force to be reckoned with, a refreshing blast of righteous anger when tackling such subjects as class, nationalism, immigration and toxic masculinity. He also shows an emphatetic side, particularly on June. Few other bands would take on such a subject as the death of a child. But they are not dour, an air of positivity pervades their raw, infectious agit-pop.

Idles will be in concert at the O2 Institute in Birmingham, on October 26, a busy night at the Digbeth venue with veteran reggae act The Mighty Diamonds and singer-songwriter Sophie Hunger in the other two rooms.

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- ✔ Tea, coffee and cake on one afternoon
- ✔ Excursion to Brixham & Dartmouth

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4 Days by Coach *only* **£159**

BLACKPOOL
Illuminations Break

Departing Wednesday 17 Oct

Blackpool is an iconic seaside resort buzzing with excitement at any time of year. During our break we'll see the famous Blackpool Illuminations after dusk, renowned as the biggest and best light show in the world, stretching for six miles along the seafront.

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- ✔ 2 nights at the Chequers Plaza Hotel, Blackpool with dinner & breakfast
- ✔ Blackpool Illuminations evening drive

Optional excursion to Fleetwood & Cleveleys (£7pp)

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For more information or to book, please call: **03332 341 875** Quote **JGRT**
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033 numbers are free within inclusive minutes packages otherwise standard rates apply.

welcome to ...
The Island Pool
A classic country pub serving a high standard of food and great traditional ales
The Island Pool, Wolverhampton Road, Kidderminster DY10 3RX (formerly Cookley Arms)

MONDAY MADNESS
1/2 price off main menu every Monday
between 5pm - 8pm (booking advisable)

KIDS EAT FREE
MONDAY - SATURDAY 3PM - 6PM
One free kid's carvery with every full paying adult. Age 12 and under Cannot be used with any other offer

BREAKFAST ALL YOU CAN EAT BUFFET STYLE.
8.30am - 11am Friday, Saturday and Sunday
Come and start the weekend the right way

FREE BOUNCY CASTLE
Weather Permitted

QUIZ NIGHT
Wednesday's from 8.30pm
Come and test your knowledge!!!

CARVERY AVAILABLE 7 DAYS A WEEK
Choose from any of our freshly selected roasted meats accompanied by Yorkshire pudding and homemade seasoning, served with a wide selection of locally grown fresh vegetables, all finished off with our Chef's secret recipe gravy.
FROM £5.49

For bookings or further details please call **01562 850311**
www.theislandpool.net

High standard of food and ales

The Island Pool is a classic country pub serving not only a high standard of food but great traditional ales.

A spokesman said: "We have to offer, a carvery with a choice freshly roasted meats accompanied by a wide variety of fresh locally sourced vegetables.

"Alongside our carvery, we have an extensive menu with a range of foods to suit any and every palate. We are proud to offer exquisite beef steaks, also sourced locally, and are all cooked to perfection.

"Sumptuous breakfast, tasty lunch and sexy dinners. Stop by for our varied menu and enjoy our farm to table concept."

The pub is open daily between Sunday and Friday, from 12pm and 8pm and Saturday from 12noon to 9pm.

Breakfast is available on Friday, Saturday and Sunday between 8.30am and 11am.

The spokesman added: "Whether it's brunch, lunch or dinner you're joining us for, call to reserve your table on (01562) 850311."

SATURDAY'S TV SEPTEMBER 8

CHOICE

Jess Gillam

Last Night of the Proms (BBC1, 9pm)
The classical music celebration continues live from the Royal Albert Hall with the ever-popular Marche militaire francaise by Saint-Saens. Award-winning 18-year-old saxophonist Jess Gillam performs Scaramouche by Milhaud. Plus, baritone Gerry Finley performs the Soliloquy from Rodgers and Hammerstein's Carousel, and there is a nationwide sing-along of traditional First World War songs with contributions from the Proms in the Park events in Swansea, Glasgow and Belfast. The event is then brought to its familiar and rousing close with Rule, Britannia!, Land of Hope and Glory and Jerusalem.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Nadiya's Family Favourites. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **12.30** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Great North CityGames. Coverage from the Newcastle Gateshead Quayside. **3.45** Money for Nothing. (R) **4.15 Film:** Brave. (2012) Animated fantasy, with the voice of Kelly Macdonald. **5.40** BBC News. **5.50** Regional Programme. **5.55** Impossible Celebrities.

6.45 Pointless Celebrities. An EastEnders edition of the general knowledge quiz with contestants including Natalie Cassidy, Dean Gaffney, Perry Fenwick, Emma Barton, and Lisa Hammond.

7.35 Strictly Come Dancing Launch Show 2018. New series. The pro-celebrity ballroom contest hosted by Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman returns, featuring a medley of Nile Rodgers' greatest hits performed by Chic and the man himself. Nile is also joined by Craig David and Stefflon Don for a special performance of their new single. The line-up this year features former Pussycat Dolls singer Ashley Roberts, Casualty actor Charles Venn (Jacob Masters), Red Dwarf's Danny John-Jules, Steps singer Faye Tozer, former England cricketer Graeme Swann, YouTube personality Joe Sugg, BBC newsreader Kate Silverton, TV presenter and campaigner Katie Piper, Paralympic swimmer and paratriathlete Lauren Steadman, Blue singer and former EastEnders actor Lee Ryan, This Morning doctor Ranj Singh, stand-up comedian Seann Walsh, investigative journalist Stacey Dooley, TV presenter and fashion expert Susannah Constantine, and radio DJ Vick Hope.

9.00 Last Night of the Proms. The classical music celebration continues live from the Royal Albert Hall, featuring the familiar and rousing close of Rule, Britannia!, Land of Hope and Glory and Jerusalem.

10.35 BBC News; Weather.

10.55 The NFL Show. Mark Chapman is joined by former players Osi Umenyiora and Jason Bell to present highlights of the opening weekend of fixtures.

11.25 Film: The Client. (1994)

1.20 Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.25** BBC News.

BBC2

6.40 Top Class. (R) **7.05** Marrying Mum and Dad. (R) **7.35** Officially Amazing Goes Bunkers. (R) **8.05** The Dengineers. (R) **8.35** Absolute Genius with Dick & Dom. (R) **9.05** Planet Dinosaur. (R) **9.35** David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities. (R) **10.00** Nature's Miracle Babies. (R) **11.00** Natural World: The Last Grizzly of Paradise Valley. (R) **12.00** Nigel Slater: Eating Together. (R) **12.30** Great British Menu. (R) **1.00** Great British Menu. (R) **1.30** Tom Kerridge's Proper Pub Food. (R) **2.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **3.00** Wanted Down Under. (R) **3.45** Scrappers – Back in the Yard. (R) **4.15** Saving Lives at Sea. (R) **5.15** Trust Me, I'm a Doctor. (R) **5.45** Ancient Invisible Cities. (R)

6.45 Dad's Army. Mainwaring tries to talk Frazer into depositing his hoard of gold sovereigns in a safe place – his own bank. Vintage comedy, with Arthur Lowe and John Laurie. (R)

7.15 Last Night of the Proms. The season comes to a close with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and former chief conductor Andrew Davis steering proceedings live from the Royal Albert Hall. The centenary of the end of the First World War is marked with a new work from Roxanna Panufnik, which also rounds off the season's original premieres and features the BBC Singers and BBC Symphony Chorus. The evening also includes music by Hindemith, Berlioz and Charles Hubert Parry, who is celebrated 100 years after his death with a performance of Blest Pair of Sirens.

9.00 Film: Spotlight. (2015) Premiere. A team of investigative reporters for a Boston newspaper investigate reports of children being molested within the Catholic church. The journalists discover the situation is far worse than it seemed, as they find a conspiracy among the city's legal, religious and government establishments to cover up decades of abuse. Oscar-winning fact-based drama, starring Mark Ruffalo and Michael Keaton.

11.00 Film: Drive. (2011) A stuntman-turned-getaway driver tries to protect a criminal's family, only to get drawn into a conflict with the Mafia. Crime drama, starring Ryan Gosling and Carey Mulligan.

12.35 Josh Widdicombe: What Do I Do Now. (R) **1.35** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Dino Dana. **6.10** Super 4. (R) **6.25** Super 4. (R) **6.35** Make It Pop. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Cut the Rope: Om Nom Stories. (R) **7.05** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.15** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.30** ToonMarty. (R) **7.40** ToonMarty. (R) **7.55** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Zoe Ball on Saturday. **9.25** James Martin's Saturday Morning. **11.35** £10k Holiday Home. (R) **12.10** ITV News; Weather. **12.25** The X Factor. (R) **1.30** ITV Racing: Live from Haydock. Ed Chamberlin and Francesca Cumani introduce coverage of this afternoon's meetings at Haydock Park, Kempton Park and Ascot, featuring eight races. **4.30** WOS Wrestling. **5.30** ITV News; Weather. **5.40** Regional Programme ; Weather.**5.50 Film:** Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. (2001) An orphaned boy with magical powers enrols at a special school for young wizards. First in the fantasy adventure series, starring Daniel Radcliffe, Alan Rickman and Richard Harris.

8.30 The X Factor. The SSE Arena Wembley is the location as the audition rounds continue in the talent contest, hosted by Dermot O'Leary. Judges Robbie Williams, Ayda Williams, Louis Tomlinson and Simon Cowell decide who goes through to the Six Chair Challenge, before the competition really heats up later in the year with the live shows.

9.45 The Jonathan Ross Show. The host is joined on tonight's show by guests Cate Blanchett, Jack Black, Joanna Lumley and Ashley Banjo, while Ray Winstone and Paul Whitehouse also drop in to talk about new heist movie King of Thieves. John Legend performs live in the studio.

10.50 ITV News; Weather.

11.05 UEFA Nations League Highlights. England v Spain. Action from the League A Group 4 encounter at Wembley Stadium.

12.05 WOS Wrestling. Crater continues to wreak havoc on the WOS arena and WOS Male Championship contenders push their claim to the title. Presented by Rachel Stringer. (R) **1.00** Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas. **3.00** Long Lost Family. A woman hopes to be reunited with the son she gave up for adoption, while a nurse wants to meet her father for the first time. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. Text-based information service.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 Adventure & Trail Running: UK Challenge. **6.40** Mobil 1: The Grid. **7.05** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **10.55** The Simpsons. (R) **11.25** The Simpsons. (R) **12.00** Come Dine with Me. (R) **1.00** Four in a Bed. (R) **1.30** Four in a Bed. (R) **2.00** Four in a Bed. (R) **2.30** Four in a Bed. (R) **3.00** Four in a Bed. (R) **3.35** A Place in the Sun: Winter Sun. (R) **4.35** The People's Vet. **5.35** Escape to the Chateau: DIY. (R)

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Britain at Low Tide. Natural History Museum palaeontologist Tori Herridge returns with the maritime documentary, which makes use of state-of-the-art technology to explore Britain's coastline for signs of the nation's seafaring history. This time, she begins in East Sussex, where she explores the wreck of a ship that sank in the 1740s along with its cargo. (R)

8.00 Lost Cities of the Maya: Revealed. Documentary exploring the ruins of a hidden civilisation in the jungles of Central America, and revealing what fresh information the find has revealed about the Mayan people. (R)

9.00 Massacre at Ballymurphy. Documentary investigating the massacre in West Belfast in August 1971, in which 11 people died when British troops opened fire on Catholic residents. The film presents evidence suggesting that, contrary to the claims of the army at the time, all of the victims were innocent and unarmed. The families of the dead accuse Britain's elite Parachute Regiment of carrying out the shootings, the same regiment which, less than six months later, was to shoot dead 13 unarmed people on what became known the world over as Bloody Sunday.

10.30 Film: Gladiator. (2000) A Roman general is forced to fight as a gladiator and uses his position to seek revenge for the murder of his family. Oscar-winning epic, with Russell Crowe.

1.20 Hollyoaks. (R) **3.30** French Collection. (R) **4.25** Village of the Year with Penelope Keith. (R) **5.20** Food Unwrapped. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **9.50** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.25** Access. **10.30** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.20** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.20** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.20** Bad Tenants, Rogue Landlords. (R) **2.20** Bad Tenants, Rogue Landlords. (R) **3.20** Rich House, Poor House. (R) **4.20** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! (R) **5.20** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! (R)

6.10 Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away! Agents head to Manchester to recover more than £400,000 owed to a builder, while officers in Kent chase over £11,000 owed by a couple for unpaid rent. (R)

6.55 5 News Weekend.

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v India. Highlights of day two of the Fifth and final Test in the series, taking place at The Kia Oval, London. With commentary by Michael Vaughan, Mark Nicholas, Alison Mitchell, Sourav Ganguly, Ebony Rainford Brent and Charles Dagnall.

8.00 Brunel's Britain: King of the Sea. Rob Bell concludes his two-part documentary series on the great British engineer with the story of his two masterpieces of ship design – the SS Great Britain, the great-great-grandmother of all modern ships, and the SS Great Eastern. By the time he had finalised the latter's design, the ship was 692ft long and weighed nearly 19,000 tons. The biggest vessel afloat of its era, it dominated the final years of Brunel's life, generating great controversy at the time. It has even been blamed for causing his death. (R)

9.00 How the Victorians Built Britain. Michael Buerk looks at the creation of the sewer system, delving into the archives to reveal how appalling sanitary conditions forced the city of Liverpool to take action.

10.00 Celebrity Big Brother. Highlights of the housemates' past 24 hours under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, as they try to get used to living alongside one another.

11.05 Most Shocking Celebrity Moments of the 80s. Countdown of controversial events from the decade. (R)

1.40 SuperCasino. **3.10** Traffic Cops. (R) **4.00** Britain by Bike with Larry & George Lamb. (R) **4.45** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.10** House Doctor. (R) **5.35** Nick's Quest. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four
7.00 Secrets of Our Living Planet **8.00** Lost Land of the Tiger **9.00** The Plague **10.45** Elton John at the BBC **11.40** Glam Rock at the BBC **12.40** Top of the Pops: 1986 **1.10** Secrets of Our Living Planet **2.10** Lost Land of the Tiger **3.10** Close

ITV2
11.15 The X Factor **12.15** Celebrity Catchphrase **1.20** You've Been Framed! Gold **2.25 Film:** Dirty Dancing 2: Havana Nights (2004) **3.25** FYI Daily **3.30 Film:** Dirty Dancing 2: Havana Nights (2004) **4.10 Film:** Arthur (2011) **5.10** FYI Daily **5.15 Film:** Arthur (2011) **6.20 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man 2 (2014) **7.20** FYI Daily **7.25 Film:** The Amazing Spider-Man 2 (2014) **9.00 Film:** American Pie: Reunion (2012) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10 Film:** American Pie: Reunion (2012) **11.15** Family Guy **12.15** American Dad! **1.10 Film:** Keith Lemon: The Film (2012) **2.15** FYI Daily **2.20 Film:** Keith Lemon: The Film (2012) **2.50** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3
3.10 Film: Carry On Matron (1972) **4.55** Lewis **7.00** Midsomer Murders **9.00** Endeavour **11.00** Vera **1.00** On the Buses **2.00** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4
4.15 Football's Greatest: George Best **4.30** Storage Wars **5.55** The Chase: Celebrity Special **7.00** Cycling: Vuelta a Espana **8.00** Cycling: Tour of Britain **9.00 Film:** The Fugitive (1993) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10 Film:** The Fugitive (1993) **11.45 Film:** Swordfish (2001) **12.45** FYI Daily **12.50 Film:** Swordfish (2001) **1.45** Better Late Than Never **2.30** The Protectors **2.55** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4
12.05 Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.05 Film:** Diary of a Wimpy Kid (2010) **3.00** The Great British Bake Off **4.15** The Great British Bake Off: An Extra Slice **5.20** Extreme Cake Makers **5.35** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol (2011) **11.40** Gogglebox **12.40** Tattoo Fixers **1.50** Rude Tube **2.45** Gogglebox **3.40** Rude Tube **4.05** Rude(ish) Tube **4.50** How I Met Your Mother **5.30** Melissa & Joey

Film4
11.00 Crack in the World (1965) **1.00** Bridge to Terabithia (2007) **2.55** Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters (2013) **4.55** Carry On Spying (1964) **6.40** The Monuments Men (2014) **9.00** Solace (2015) **11.05** No One Lives (2012) **12.45** Savages (2012) **3.25** Close

OPEN DAY EVENTS
Thursday 20th September 6pm-8.30pm
Saturday 22nd September 9am-12pm

Our open events are the perfect opportunity to experience the Forge family first hand. You can meet the Executive Principal and our Head of Academy, enjoy a tour, take part in activities and, most importantly, meet our students.

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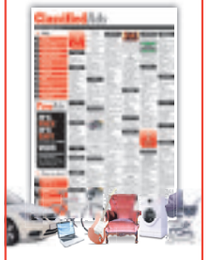
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CHOICE

Bear Grylls

Celebrity Island with Bear Grylls (Channel 4, 9pm)

New series. Another party of celebrities brave a deserted Pacific island. This year's team of castaways consists of Olympic rower James Cracknell, boxer Anthony Ogogo, Hollywood star Eric Roberts, Pete Wicks (Towie), Montana Brown (Love Island), transgender campaigner and journalist Paris Lees, actor Martin Kemp, TV medic Dr Saleyha Ahsan, former model Jo Wood and Roxanne Pallett (Emmerdale). Pete takes charge as they look for a place to camp, but his decision to leave most of their fresh water behind stirs up resentment as the weather worsens.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **8.30** The Andrew Marr Show. **9.30** Great North Run. **1.30** BBC News; Weather. **1.45** Still Open All Hours. (R) **2.15** Hold the Sunset. (R) **2.45** Points of View. **3.00** Songs of Praise. **3.35** Fake or Fortune? (R) **4.35** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.35** Shop Well for Less? (R)

6.35 BBC News.

6.50 Regional Programme.

7.00 Countryfile. Anita Rani and John Craven present the show from Essex, reporting on how plant-based superfoods like borage and chia are becoming more popular and how timber that has washed up on the county's shoreline from around the world is being repurposed. Including Weather for the Week Ahead.

8.00 Fake or Fortune? Fiona Bruce and art expert Philip Mould investigate the first work of sculpture featured on the show, an unusual piece called The Gazing Head, which may have been made by Alberto Giacometti in 1930s Paris. The quest to uncover the truth is complicated by the fact that the sculpture was once broken into several pieces by a cat.

9.00 Bodyguard. As the security service's position grows weaker, the police takes the opportunity to reclaim control of the investigation. David struggles to come to terms with the devastating events of the previous 24 hours, and finds himself being questioned by counter-terrorism agents. Pushed to breaking point, he finds an unexpected source of support in his estranged wife, who leaves him determined to take an active role in the case – starting by finding out more about those in the government who work closely with Julia.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Kylie Minogue Live at Hyde Park. The singer performs at the BBC Radio 2 Festival in a Day, featuring a selection of classic hits and tracks from her recent country music-inspired album Golden.

11.30 The Women's Football Show. Eilidh Barbour introduces highlights and talking points from the opening day of the 2018/19 Women's Super League.

12.00 Weather for the Week Ahead.
12.05 BBC News.

BBC2

6.35 Around the World in 80 Gardens. (R) **7.35** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** The Beechgrove Garden. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** Great British Menu. (R) **12.00** Great British Menu. (R) **12.30** Great British Menu. (R) **1.00** Tom Kerridge's Proper Pub Food. (R) **1.30** Hairy Bikers' Best of British. (R) **2.30** Wastemen. (R) **3.30** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **4.30** Flog It! (R) **5.00** Great North Run Highlights.

6.00 Film: Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade. (1989) The intrepid archaeologist sets out to find his estranged father, who has gone missing while searching for the Holy Grail. Once reunited, the duo team up to finish the task and locate the sacred relic before the Nazis get their hands on it. Action adventure sequel directed by Steven Spielberg, starring Harrison Ford, Sean Connery, Alison Doody, River Phoenix, Julian Glover and Denholm Elliott.

8.00 Dragons' Den. The panel assess the profit-making potential of business plans for gourmet cheesecake, hired drones, and collagen-infused gin. Presented by Evan Davis.

9.00 Eight Go Rallying: The Road to Saigon. The teams have the finishing line in their sights as they travel along Vietnam's coastline to Saigon – but the last day brings one duo to the brink of disaster. Last in the series.

10.00 Mock the Week. Angela Barnes, Ed Gamble, Rhys James, Nish Kumar and Tiff Stevenson join host Dara O Briain and regular panellist Hugh Dennis for the topical comedy show. (R)

10.30 No Activity. New series. Comedy following the work of two low-level detectives on a stake-out. In the first episode, Bruce and Hendy start the operation with a plaster dolphin in their car.

10.55 No Activity. Stokes and Hendy find themselves sitting in an empty dockyard watching shipping containers, but an overly eager security guard disrupts the operation.

11.20 The Mighty Redcar. Documentary about people in the North Yorkshire seaside resort Redcar. (R)

12.05 American Justice. (R) **1.05** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **2.00** Holby City. (R) **3.00** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Dino Dana. **6.10** Super 4. (R) **6.25** Super 4. (R) **6.35** Make It Pop. (R) **6.55** Signed Stories: Share a Story. (R) **7.00** Cut the Rope: Om Nom Stories. (R) **7.05** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.15** Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **7.30** ToonMarty. (R) **7.40** ToonMarty. (R) **7.55** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Zoe Ball On Sunday. **9.25** Ninja Warrior UK. (R) **10.25** WOS Wrestling. (R) **11.25** The X Factor. (R) **12.45** 5 Gold Rings. (R) **1.45** ITV News; Weather. **2.00** Goodwood Revival Live. Coverage of the day's biggest races from Goodwood. **4.00** Paul O'Grady's Little Heroes. (R) **4.30** Tipping Point. (R) **5.30** The Chase. (R)

6.30 ITV News; Weather.

6.45 Regional Programme; Weather.

7.00 5 Gold Rings. Game show, hosted by Phillip Schofield, in which contestants compete to answer visual questions by placing rings on an LED floor in five increasingly difficult stages. This episode features sisters competing against a married couple.

8.00 The X Factor. Dermot O'Leary hosts further action from the arena auditions from the SSE Arena, Wembley, in which solo singers and groups compete to impress judges Robbie Williams, Ayda Williams, Louis Tomlinson and Simon Cowell. If three or more judges like what they see, the performers can win the chance to go through to the judge's deliberation, and possibly even the Six Chair Challenge.

9.00 Vanity Fair. Becky has moved in with her rich aunt Matilda, and seems to have a bright future ahead of her. However, war is brewing on the horizon, which threatens the fortunes of the scheming social climber and everyone she knows. Adaptation of William Makepeace Thackeray's novel, starring Olivia Cooke.

10.05 The Imitation Game. Alexander Armstrong hosts the impressions-based panel show, with team captains Rory Bremner and Debra Stephenson joined by panellists Christina Bianco and Jon Culshaw.

10.45 ITV News; Weather.

11.00 Coronation Street's DNA Secrets. (R)

12.25 Monster Carp. (R) **1.15** Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.40 Motor Sport: FIA World Rallycross Championship. **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Simpsons. (R) **12.55** The Simpsons. (R) **1.25 Film:** The Book of Life. (2014) Animated adventure, with the voice of Diego Luna. **3.15** The £100k Drop. (R) **4.20** Orangutan Jungle School. (R) **5.20** The Great British Bake Off. (R)

6.35 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Hidden Britain by Drone: Heatwave Special. Tony Robinson discovers how the hot summer of 2018 led to unexpected archaeological discoveries, as parch marks on the ground have shown signs of what is buried beneath it. Tony talks to archaeologists and drone pilots who have recorded these finds, and discovers the race to document these hidden secrets before they are destroyed by rain.

8.00 Battle of Britain: Model Squadron. New series. Radio controlled plane enthusiasts from Britain and Germany are brought together by historian James Holland to recreate three pivotal days in the most famous aerial battle of the Second World War, using specially designed model aircraft that are able to shoot each other down. The re-enactment picks up from July 4 1940, just a month after the Dunkirk evacuation when bombing of British shipping began as a prelude to invasion.

9.00 Celebrity Island with Bear Grylls. New series. Another party of celebrities brave a deserted Pacific island, including Olympic rower James Cracknell, Hollywood star Eric Roberts, and Emmerdale's Roxanne Pallett.

10.00 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Jimmy Carr hosts the comedy panel show, with Sean Lock and Bill Bailey taking on special guest captain Joe Wilkinson and Isy Suttie. (R)

11.00 Film: The Lincoln Lawyer. (2011) Thriller, with Matthew McConaughey and Marisa Tomei.

1.10 The Supervet. (R) **2.05** The Secret Life of the Zoo. (R) **3.00** Grand Designs Australia. (R) **3.55** Mobil 1: The Grid. (R) **4.25** Gillette World Sport. **4.50** Village of the Year with Penelope Keith. (R) **5.45** Kirstie's Handmade Treasures. (R) **5.50** Countdown. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.10** Peppa Pig. (R) **6.15** Luo Bao Bei. (R) **6.30** Digby Dragon. (R) **6.40** Fireman Sam. (R) **6.50** Thomas & Friends. (R) **7.05** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.15** Rusty Rivets. **7.30** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.35** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.45** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **7.55** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.15** Nella the Princess Knight. (R) **8.30** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **8.50** Pirata & Capitano. (R) **9.05** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **9.20** Floogals. (R) **9.40** Paw Patrol. (R) **9.50** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.25** Britain's Greatest Bridges. (R) **10.35** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.25** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.20** Friends. (R) **12.55** Friends. (R) **1.20** Friends. (R) **1.50** Friends. (R) **2.20** Friends. (R) **2.50** Friends. (R) **3.15** Friends. (R) **3.45** Friends. (R) **4.15** Friends. (R) **4.45** Friends. (R) **5.15 Film:** Tarzan. (1999) Disney animated adventure, with the voice of Tony Goldwyn.

6.15 Access. Showbiz news and gossip.

6.20 Film: Tarzan. (1999) Concluded.

7.00 Cricket on 5. England v India. Highlights of day three of the Fifth and final Test in the series, taking place at The Kia Oval, London.

7.55 5 News Weekend.

8.00 That's So 1982. A look back at 1982, featuring news, pop and TV archive clips. It was a year that saw the Falklands War, the birth of Prince William, Channel 4's launch together with the first episode of Countdown, and Steven Spielberg's ET: The Extra-Terrestrial break box office records. It was also the age of new romanticism and electropop, while tracks such as Come on Eileen, Eye of the Tiger and Pass the Dutchie stormed the charts. (R)

9.00 Celebrity Big Brother. The ups and downs of life in the BB house as friendships and alliances are made, battle lines are drawn and arguments erupt.

10.00 Celebrity Ghost Hunt: Haunted Holiday. New series. Rylan Clark-Neal takes a team of celebrities on a ghost hunt in Ireland's Wicklow Gaol.

11.05 30 Inches Tall and Turning 18: Extraordinary People. (R)

12.00 Film: Red Dawn. (2012) **1.40** SuperCasino. **3.10** Brunel's Britain: King of the Sea. (R) **4.00** World's Most Pampered Pets. (R) **4.45** Wildlife SOS. (R) **5.10** House Doctor. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 The Joy of Train Sets – The Model Railway Story **8.00** A303: Highway to the Sun **9.00** Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Monumental Art **10.00** The Sky at Night **10.30** Inside CERN: A Horizon Special **11.30** The Last Explorers **12.30** Al Murray's Great British War Movies **1.30** Pappano's Classical Voices **2.30** A303: Highway to the Sun **3.30** Close

ITV2

12.50 Ninja Warrior UK **1.50** You've Been Framed! Gold **2.50** The X Factor **4.05 Film:** The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (2008) **5.05** FYI Daily **5.10 Film:** The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (2008) **6.10 Film:** Minions (2015) **7.20** FYI Daily **7.25 Film:** Minions (2015) **8.00 Film:** Hot Pursuit (2015) **9.05** FYI Daily **9.10 Film:** Hot Pursuit (2015) **9.50** Family Guy **11.20** American Dad! **12.15** The Cleveland Show **12.40** Ghosted **1.05** Release the Hounds **2.10** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records

ITV3

1.10 Goodnight Mister Tom **3.20 Film:** Columbo: Suitable for Framing (1971) **5.00** Foyle's War **9.00** The Good Karma Hospital **11.00** Wire in the Blood **12.40** A Touch of Frost **2.30** Road to Avonlea

ITV4

11.05 Film: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989) **12.05** FYI Daily **12.10 Film:** Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989) **1.00** Cycling: Vuelta a Espana **2.00** Cycling: Tour of Britain **3.00** Goals of the 70s **3.15** Cycling: Tour of Britain Live. Coverage of the eighth and final stage of the race. **5.30** Storage Wars **6.00** The Chase: Celebrity Special **7.00** Cycling: Vuelta a Espana **8.00** Cycling: Tour of Britain **9.00 Film:** Rambo: First Blood Part II (1985) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05 Film:** Rambo: First Blood Part II (1985) **11.05 Film:** Born to Raise Hell (2010) **12.05** FYI Daily **12.10 Film:** Born to Raise Hell (2010) **1.00** The Avengers

E4

12.30 Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.30** Young Sheldon **2.30** The Big Bang Theory **4.30 Film:** Paddington (2014) **6.20** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Krypton **10.00** Fear the Walking Dead **11.00** Gogglebox **12.05** The Big Bang Theory **1.05** Krypton **2.05** Fear the Walking Dead **2.50** Rude Tube

Film4

11.00 Guadalcanal Diary (1943) **1.00** Stuart Little (1999) **2.40** Eragon (2006) **4.40** The Dam Busters (1955) **7.10** The Cold Light of Day (2012) **9.00** Ride Along 2 (2016) **11.10** Killing Them Softly (2012) **1.05** Hallam Foe (2007)

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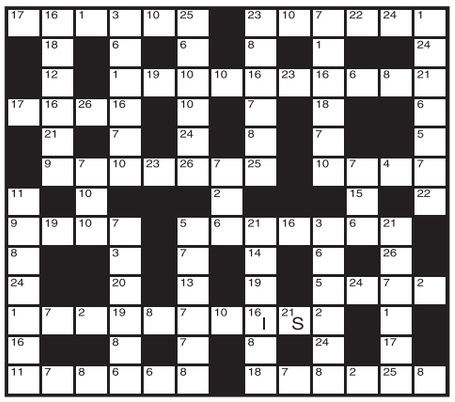
No.496

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



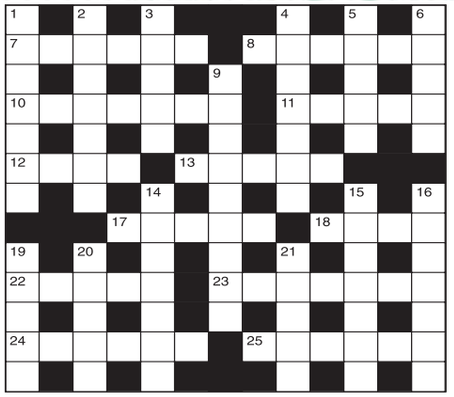
1	14
2	15
3	16 I
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21 S
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
E	L	P	V	K	S	I	G	A	U	Z	J	F
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Y	B	X	H	W	C	Q	T	D	R	N	M	O

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues – both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

7. Genuineness of fellow-feeling about ancient city (6)
8. Language of refinement (6)
10. Receiver's illegal act (7)
11. Dance to produce white skin again? (5)
12. Timely stitch saving (4)
13. Bird gives a lift? (5)
17. So bun could become a gratuity (5)
18. Bad weather in the south at present (4)
22. A spinster gone wrong (5)
23. City of Abraham? (7)
24. Boring tool gets me in the back (6)
25. All for change of flowers (6)

Down

1. Assign father to rise to the matter at issue (7)
2. Contemptuous of sacred things, but in favour of temple (7)
3. Paradoxically MPs had to before taking their seats (5)
4. A lot of money obtained from music (7)
5. They have their pride, of course (5)
6. Worth a fling (5)
9. Pull to pieces completely while sobbing (9)
14. No terms for a giant (7)
15. Getting all meals while sailing? (2,5)
16. Cheat using new lids (7)
19. Girl is about right to take to the altar (5)
20. Five find knotted tail essential (5)
21. Fish where two lines meet (5)

Quick Clues:

Across

7. Calm (6)
8. Deviate (6)
10. Airman (7)
11. Not at all (5)
12. Profound (4)
13. Fireplace (5)
17. Danger (5)
18. Eager (4)
22. Mild (5)
23. Generous (7)
24. Leap (6)
25. Agreement (6)

Down

1. Ascending (7)
2. Sailor (7)
3. Devoutness (5)
4. Cheat (7)
5. Long for (5)
6. Core (5)
9. Axiom (9)
14. Green (7)
15. Scholarly (7)
16. Blow up (7)
19. Pervert (5)
20. Wed (5)
21. Confound (5)

Sudoku

	1			2			9	
		5				3		1
3	9		8	1	4			2
9		8				6		
	4		3		6		5	
	7	3				1		
5			4		9			7
		9				2		
	6			7			3	5

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

8	7	6	3	4	1	9	5	2
9	4	1	2	8	5	7	3	6
3	5	2	7	9	6	1	8	4
1	6	5	8	2	9	3	4	7
4	8	9	6	7	3	2	1	5
7	2	3	1	5	4	6	9	8
6	9	8	5	1	7	4	2	3
2	1	7	4	3	8	5	6	9
5	3	4	9	6	2	8	7	1

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Reach; 4 Donkeys; 8 Grosser; 9 Grave; 10 Tied; 11 Restrict; 13 Shed; 14 Rate; 16 Outright; 17 Wash; 20 Allot; 21 Reunion; 22 Endless; 23 Press. Down: 1 Right up to date; 2 Abode; 3 Most; 4 Darken; 5 Nightcap; 6 Examine; 7 Sweet nothings; 12 Belittle; 13 Settled; 15 Shorts; 18 Aside; 19 Hump.
QUICK - Across: 1 Excel; 4 Sadness; 8 Trade-in; 9 Vying; 10 Bore; 11 Prospect; 13 Tail; 14 Cost; 16 Harmless; 17 Bowl; 20 Emend; 21 Egghead; 22 Tatters; 23 Dense. Down: 1 Establishment; 2 Chair; 3 Lees; 4 Sundry; 5 Division; 6 Evident; 7 Sign the pledge; 12 Dislodge; 13 Torrent; 15 Assess; 18 Ocean; 19 Aged.

Quiz

1. What was the pen name of author Amantine Aurore Lucile Dupin?
2. What does a natural trumpet not have?
3. In which US state is Black Rock Desert?
4. In Greek mythology, of what was Aeolus the god?
5. What was the Gestapo's nickname for WW2 nurse Nancy Wake?
6. What type of creature is a razor-fish?
7. What do the letters CH stand for when appended to a name?
8. Who was the first British-born astronaut to walk in space?
9. Which US presidential home did Eisenhower name after his grandson?
10. In the Old Testament, who caused Samson's hair to be cut off?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Hickstead; 2 The equator; 3 New York; 4 Sam Peckinpah; 5 McLaren; 6 The Jungle Book; 7 Galaxy; 8 A pawnbroker; 9 Epiphany; 10 A sea-bird.

Niner: EXPULSION

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

23684735 gives an item of clothing,
94321 gives a second item of clothing,
56323 gives a headdress.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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Departing Monday 19 Nov

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- ✔ 4 nights at the Pentire Hotel, Newquay with breakfast & dinner (includes traditional 'Christmas' dinner with a complimentary glass of wine)
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Stourbridge Chronicle Thursday, September 6, 2018

Practical and durable the clue's in the name

It's a machine that hides its utilitarian purpose rather well

By Ian Donaldson

When it's a car name you have probably never have heard of – and certainly can't spell – you need to get yourself noticed.

How about a warranty that stretches over seven years and 150,000 miles? Like to learn something about the vehicle that covers even its radio against failure until 2025? Thought so.

Well, it's called a SsangYong Musso, it's made in South Korea and it's available for less than £20,000 to a business user who will put this no nonsense pick-up truck to work.

But back to names. Musso is Korean for rhino, which tells you what its maker wants us to think of this newcomer; tough enough to ford rivers and laugh at roads rutted deeply enough to give an army jeep pause for thought.

And like a rhino it's a rare sight.

This year a new business plan that hacks back at unprofitable sales in areas like daily rental and Motability will see still fewer new SsangYongs hit the road, but hopefully making solid money in the process.

To do that they'll need some vehicles we might want to buy. One arrived last year in the imposing shape of the SsangYong Rexton, an SUV that comes very well equipped for the price.

Now we have the Musso, using the Rexton's 2.2

The cabin is notably hushed place

litre diesel engine, tough chassis and drivetrain but adding a big load bay that turns SUV into pick-up with the ability to carry more than a tonne of payload – with happy financial consequences to a person who buys one for business.

The four-door cabin has rear seats amply roomy enough for a couple of burly men or three people who chomp fewer chips when they clock off for the day.

Without the need to pop VAT on the bill a new Musso can be yours for £19,995. Like dearer versions (they stretch to £28,495 for a thoroughly well equipped limited launch edition Rhino version) it will tow a 3.5 tonne trailer if you add £1,250 worth of automatic transmission in place of the standard fit six-speed manual, which manages 3.2 tonnes.

Talking of Rhino, the newcomer's different grades come with the mandatory-for-a-pick-up roll call of butchness, with Rebel and Saracen above the plain Jane EX entry level vehicle.

Even the EX comes with good specification including 17ins alloy wheels, DAB audio and Bluetooth, electric windows, remote central locking (including the tailgate), air conditioning, auto wipers and lights and a full sized spare wheel.

Pick any new Musso and you'll have a machine that hides its utilitarian purpose rather well before a bad patch of road presents itself. Until then, the cabin is notably hushed place to spend your working day and looking and feeling smarter than you might expect from a pick-up workhorse.

Performance is good enough for you not to notice (121mph top speed for the manual, 115mph for auto but no quoted acceleration figures) and the ride is a bit jiggly, but acceptable, on better road surfaces.

The rear suspension struggles more on rougher roads, being tamed a bit with 700kgs of concrete blocks in the load bay but never settling confidently. Already SsangYong is looking at changing the rear springs to provide a more settled ride.

The Musso recorded 35.8mpg (32.9mpg auto) in the official tests; a mixed test route saw 31.2mpg on the trip computer.

Exhaust CO2 figures of 211g/km (226g/km auto) would mean expensive road tax if the Musso was a car – but its light commercial vehicle status brings a flat rate of £230 a year.

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Parking and reversing blamed for many serious van accidents

Figures from the Department for Transport show there were 1,350 parking and reversing van accidents involving light commercial vehicles weighing up to 3.5 tonnes in 2016 that resulted in deaths or serious and slight injuries to drivers, passengers, pedestrians or cyclists.

Far more parking and reversing incidents also occur which do not have a direct 'human' impact – but which will inevitably affect fleet and business operations.

As well as causing injuries, these accidents force vans off the road and into Van Centres for repairs. Downtime costs fleets an average of £550 a day per van while average UK car repair bills stand at £1,678.

Parking cameras and sensors can reduce the chance or severity of accidents and Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles offers these driver assistance systems across its range of Caddy, Transporter and Crafter vans.

Park Assist helps eliminate the risk of accidents by parking the vehicle automatically.

To use the system, drivers simply press a button and the vehicle uses multiple sensors to steer itself into the tightest parking spots. All drivers have to do is operate the pedals to execute the manoeuvre.

Front and rear parking sensors can be added as part of Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles' Business Pack, while a rear-view camera, Trailer Assist and side protection monitoring are also available as options.

Park Assist helps eliminate the risk of accidents by parking the vehicle automatically

Sarah Cox, head of marketing for Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles, said: "The figures show how problematic parking and reversing can be for commercial vehicle drivers, especially for those who spend a lot of time negotiating tight spaces.

"Our parking safety technology is offered across the range to allow fleet managers and owners to select the van with the best features to suit their individual operating requirements. It's all part of our Working With You promise to provide a vehicle and total support package for every UK fleet."

For more details on Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles' award-winning range of products and services, or to find your nearest Van Centre, visit www.volkswagen-vans.co.uk

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From left, Stuart Baker, Richard Cox, Andy Flower and Amir Farooque

Dartmouth Cricket Club team with captain Richard Cox, front row fourth from left

Richard Cox honoured after his last game

Richard Cox in batting action

Cox declares after an innings to remember

IT HAS spanned five decades, more than 850 matches, included countless silverware and involved some of the most famous names in cricket.

Now, 44 years after making his debut at the age of 12, Richard Cox has decided to declare his Birmingham League playing career finished.

Cox, who was the league's longest-serving player, took to the field for the final time recently for a second XI match between Halesowen and West Bromwich Dartmouth, the two clubs with whom he hoisted a host of trophies.

"It felt like now is the right time. You can't go on forever," said Cox. "There are a number of factors. I had a pretty nasty car accident last winter and 50 overs in the field was already becoming quite a strain.

"I'd noted when this fixture was scheduled when I'd made up my mind. I didn't say anything about it. I guess I just wanted to go out on my own terms."

Passion

Cricket has been a 24-7 existence for Cox, both as a player and in the many roles he has held as an administrator. But the sport has been less a hobby, or even a job – and more a religion.

The passion he holds for the game still burns as brightly as it did when he first set foot inside Edgbaston cricket ground as a seven-year-old boy.

Cox's father Trevor, who both played and umpired, was a major influence. "It was dad who got me into it, he just loved the game," he said. "I've often asked why I've played for so long. I'm guessing most people, having worked in the sport from Monday to Friday, would want their weekends off.

"But it's because my father ingrained in me this deep love for the game, which will be with me until I'm no longer here. The Birmingham League has and always will be part of my world.

"When I was a young boy I lived for it. I couldn't wait to get the Express & Star on a Monday night to read the reports and scorecards – and then the Friday edition for all the previews. It was a religion to me."

Cox made his first forays as a youth player with south Birmingham club Old Edwardians, before making the move to Dartmouth, where he made his

SPORTING FEATURE

By Matt Maher

"There's an old saying if you can find a job which is your hobby, you'll never work a day in your life."

league bow in a second XI clash with Warwickshire Colts. "It was a case of being in the right place at the right time," he said. "Someone dropped out and I was called up."

Cox would go on to spend the next 25 years at Sandwell Park, 10 as captain of the first XI. After a season at Harborne, he then began an 18-year stint at Halesowen, where he captained the team to the 2002 Premier Division title in remarkable circumstances.

"I remember being called up on the Friday by David Manning, the club's head of cricket," recalls Cox. "He said: 'We are 18 points off the relegation zone and sinking fast. I need you to take over the captaincy and try and keep us up.' Five weeks and six games later we'd won the league! "

Cox had already tasted league glory at Dartmouth nine years previously, while he was part of the team which won the knockout cup six years on the spin and reached the National Knockout final at Lord's in 1993, where they lost to league rivals Old Hill.

What sticks out above the trophies, however, are the endless anecdotes and memories.

In 1999, Cox was part of the Dartmouth team which played Smethwick when Wasim Akram, then Pakistan captain, made his debut in front of 3,000 spectators. He was at the non-striker's end when Akram delivered the ball which left team-mate Robert Fenton with a broken jaw.

"I spent a week with the bowling machine at Edgbaston cranked up to 90mph to give myself a chance," Cox recalls. "But nothing compared to facing him in real life – he came round the wicket from behind the umpire often with the ball covered up by his right hand in the run up so you couldn't detect which way it would swing. It was a guessing game.

"He then resorted to bouncing people. Robert had his jaw broken and I think his toe as well. It was an honour to be out there."

Cox counts his match-saving 44 not out, compiled over more than 40 overs in the middle, as among his most memorable innings, along with an unbeaten 55 for the league select XI against a Warwickshire attack featuring Allan Donald, Gladstone Small and Tim Munton.

He's had some illustrious team-mates too. Cox regards former Zimbabwe Test stars Dave Houghton and Andy Flower as the best two he ever played alongside.

Flower, Dartmouth's overseas player in 1994 and 1995, went on to manage and coach England.

"Andy was one of the great innovators," says Cox. "I have never known a player prepared to be so hard on themselves. He was relentless in his pursuit of success. I've been lucky to have played alongside some fantastic cricketers. There are simply too many to mention, so many unsung heroes.

Glorious

"The late 1980s and early 1990s, in particular, was a glorious time to be involved in Birmingham League cricket. The competition was fierce but played in the right manner. You had so many good overseas players and county players."

It isn't merely on the field Cox has left an impression. His career off the field would make a decent book in itself.

Currently the head of West Midlands region for the ECB, a role in which he oversees five county boards, his previous jobs have included academy manager at Warwickshire, general manager of Shropshire, while he even had a stint as chief executive of the Netherlands cricket.

"There's an old saying if you can find a job which is your hobby, you'll never work a day in your life," adds Cox. "I guess that sums it up for me.

"My current job with the ECB is based at Edgbaston. I still drive in through the gates every morning with the same enthusiasm I had as a seven-year-old boy, walking through them for the first time. I'm still in awe of the place."

Heathens' final tie put back 24 hours

CRADLEY'S home leg of the National Trophy Final with Mildenhall has been put back 24-hours. The Motor Market Heathens will now race at Wolverhampton on Tuesday September 11 to avoid being stripped of half their team.

The original date of Monday ruled out Kyle Bickley and Taylor Hampshire with the club already without Drew Kemp.

Boss Will Pottinger said: "This is great news and it underlines what can be done when clubs work together for the good of the sport.

"It's a cup final so both clubs want it to e a spectacle for the fans and now it has every chance of being that. We would like a handy lead, any lead at all, from the home leg so our fans can travel to Mildenhall for the return on the Sunday with hope of an aggregate win."

Cradley won their group in a dramatic draw at Birmingham last month to just edge out the Brummies. Mildenhall are regarded as one of the strongest teams in National League history.

Ashes hero Vaughan in sporting dinner

ASHES winning former England captain Michael Vaughan and ex-chairman of selectors Geoff Miller are special guests at at sportsman's dinner in Walsall next month.

Former Yorkshire batsman Vaughan, aged 43, captained England for 51 of his 82 Tests and masterminded the 2005 Ashes win, the first since 1986/87. He scored 5,719 Test runs at an average of more than 41, scoring 18 100s and the same number of half-centuries, before retiring through injury in 1999. He is now a pundit and has also taken part in Strictly Come Dancing.

Miller, who played first class cricket for Derbyshire and Essex, played 34 Tests for England before becoming a national selector.

The two will be appearing in a fundraiser on behalf of Rushall at Walsall's Banks's Stadium on Thursday, October 11.

Tickets are £45 each or £425 for a table of 10 and are available from Route 39 on 01902 244220.

Neal aims to bounce back at Silverstone

STOURBRIDGE racer Matt Neal has it all to do next weekend with his hopes of a fourth British Touring Car Championship title all but over.

Neal slipped 92 points behind series leader Colin Turkington following the latest round at Knockhill.

Hamstrung by having to carry 39kg of success ballast in both qualifying and race one, Neal lined up a frustrated 21st on the closely-contested grid before being removed from contention at mid-distance of race one by an errant rival.

From that point, it became an exercise in damage limitation, and the three-time champion rose to 17th in race two and a points-scoring 15th in the finale. He is now ninth in the drivers' standings ahead of the remaining two outings at Silverstone (September 15/16) and Brands Hatch GP (September 29/30).

"You need a bit of luck in the BTCC, and that's clearly been lacking but we'll be lighter going to Silverstone and we will bounce back."

Sport

Cricketer Cox bows out after fine innings
Page 31

Stylish Forde strike enough for Glassboys

STOURBRIDGE produced the perfect away performance in a 1-0 Evo-Stik Southern Premier Division Central victory at King's Lynn – but boss Gary Hackett says it could have been more convincing.

Aaron Forde's stylish strike late in the first half proved decisive at The Walks, handing Hackett the perfect response to a 6-4 defeat at Coalville Town seven days earlier.

The Glassboys had fought back with a dogged 1-1 No.9 derby draw with Halesowen Town in midweek and a more complete performance in Norfolk on Saturday left the manager happier..

"We have had a good reaction to the Coalville match, working very hard and conceding just the one in the two games since," said Hackett.

"It was a thoroughly-deserved 1-0 victory and a great shift from everyone out there. There are big expectations at King's Lynn and we knew that if we could keep them quiet the fans would get on their backs. That was exactly how it turned out. You could see the frustration from the fans and players.

"They have a good squad but I know what it is like myself, when things aren't going for you everything becomes more difficult. To be fair, though, we were very polished and crisp up front. It could have been more than the one."

On Forde's contribution, Hackett added: "For someone of Aaron's ability he should probably score a few more. We let him off the leash and, I must say, his goal was top drawer."

Veteran defender grabs injury time equaliser for Yeltz

Halesowen Town 1 St Neots Town 1

VETERAN defender Asa Charlton rescued a point for Yeltz in the final seconds of injury time to grab a point in a disappointing home performance that lacked invention.

It was the side from Cambridgeshire who dominated the first half with Halesowen creating only one chance.

Charlton cleared off the line in the tenth minute and a 13th minute corner was somehow cleared. Dion Sembie-Ferris's low shot in the 18th minute was kept out by Platt. But Halesowen did go close to opening the scoring when Lee Hughes' 33rd minute shot was sliced against his own cross-bar by Harry O'Malley with Ahmed Ali blazing the rebound high over. The Saints deservedly went ahead after 58 minutes when Claudio Ofusa's left-wing cross sailed straight into the top corner.

The game seemed to be drifting to a grim home defeat after James Roberts hit the post in the 80th minute. But in added time Charlton rose highest at the far post to head home an unlikely equaliser from a corner.

Stourbridge in winner-takes-all clash

STOURBRIDGE could lift the Birmingham League division three title after the long-time leaders lost by four wickets to Pelsall. The crown will go to whoever wins the battle of the top two, Stourbridge or Rugby, at Webb Ellis Road on Saturday.

Pelsall's Todd Henderson took 3-32 as Stourbridge were routed for 75 but in reply were made to work hard for their win by Dan Such, who took 5-30 as Pelsall lost six wickets before they reached their target.

Meanwhile, Rugby cruised to a 132-run win over Milford Hall.

Himley require 10 points from their last two matches to ensure survival from the Birmingham league Division One.

Kidderminster were promoted to the Premier and look likely to be joined by Bridgnorth. Halesowen are reliant on others if they are to remain in the race after a 58-run defeat to Barnards Green.

Opener Steve Leach (98) and Jack Edwards (48) gave the Shifnal innings a great start against Himley with a partnership of 106 providing the platform for a final total of 276-8. Stuart Wedge took 4-39 for Himley, given a flying start by Oliver Westbury (60) and Greg Wright (40) with a 105 opening stand. Callum Lea top scored with 66 but they finished six runs short on 270-8.

Skipper Ryan Tongue scored a superb unbeaten 135 from 146 balls against Halesowen as Barnards Green reached 241-7. Halesowen fell well short on 183 all out.

ALEY IN FINE STOUR DEBUT

Stourbridge 42 Leicester Lions 25

THIS season's opener lived up to expectations.

Debutant Rickie Aley had his first chance at Stourton Park points but 40 metres out and against the wind, his effort was unrewarded. It wasn't long before he had another chance,from virtually the same spot, after Lions conceded two quick penalties. Lesson learnt, he drilled a low ball straight through the uprights and it was 3-0. Lions hit back immediately as Devon Constant crashed over in the far left corner. They were only going to lead twice.

Aley found Nigel Mukarati on the left wing and he crashed over from some 15m out. Aley's conversion was short but Stour were 8-5 ahead with 14 minutes gone. Lions struck through a Harry Key penalty from 45metres. Breaks by Joe Heatley and Luke Veebel plus a tap penalty from Lions raised the noise level but each move was thwarted by some strong tackling until Rickie Aley landed a 25m penalty on 33 minutes.

England

Lions No 9 and England Counties' Henry Clements, slotted the conversion giving his side hope but more indiscipline from Lions gave Aley a 41st minute penalty shot to leave a half time score of 21-15 on the board.

On 51 minutes Lions took advantage of a Stour lineout error and Henry Clement dotted down a richly deserved 5 points and Harry Key added the extras for Lions second and last lead of 21-22.

Enter Sam Montieri who showed how dangerous he could be in attack. Mukarati drove the ball forward and the ball was recycled to new skipper Llyr Griffiths. His inside pop pass to Montieri wrong-footed the opposition and a jinking run was enough for Montieri to score his first of the season. Aley stretched the lead.

On 65 minutes Aley scampered over for his first five pointer. The conversion sailed over. Another high tackle by Stour gave Key an easy three points in front of the posts. Then Chris Scott sent the ball to Aley and a 79th minute try which, again, he converted.

Pair race towards another title

Martyn Siviter, left, and Pete Wright, right, with sponsors from TAG Speed Motorsport Ltd

ANOTHER double class win and a 10th place finish overall – even a return to Oulton Park for the first time in two years could not stop Double Two Racing seemingly riding their way to another title.

The Black Country pairing of Pete Wright and Martyn Siviter made the most of a bone-dry Cheshire track during qualifying to set themselves up for the win. Siviter went out first, before race partner Wright, from Tividale put the team first in Club 600 and National class and 11th overall. A lap of 1:47.890 was the fastest time on a 600cc bike all weekend.

Wright went out again and moved up to fifth, then with consistent laps of 1:48, the team slotted into first in the Club 600 and national classes but began hitting traffic, losing time. The Pertemps team and rivals sliced their way through before the 'limited adhesion' flags came out due to light rain.

A slick pit stop sent Siviter out but the team had to contend with arm pump. The transponder was swapped back to Martyn's bike and he brought it home.

Meanwhile Chris Ashfield, 24, from Kinver, is closing in the on the Minitwins class title.

Fourth place finish in half marathon

AFTER weeks of inactivity it was back into action for athletes from Dudley Kingswinford Running Club at the weekend with three groups travelling to three different venues looking for some race day action.

First off the mark were a group who travelled to Keswick in Cumbria for the Derwentwater Trail race, a 15k off-road epic around the Lake District fells involved almost half a mile of ascent and descent over the 9.3 mile course.

Although none of the group that travelled remain DK members, due to entry restrictions they were still listed as DK in the race results. Dave Norman was first back in 31st place in 1.18.39, Mick Quane was 36th in 1.19.34, Simon Blizzard was 42nd in 1.20.59, Pete Hood was 52nd in 1.23.35, Kevin Duckworth was 56th in 1.23.59 and Mark Gallimore crossed the line a place behind in 1.24.19. Mark Taylor finished with a fractured elbow, in 121st place in 1.35.15, while Paul Richards and Phil Smith came in 154th and 155th crossing the line together in 1.42.04.

Twenty-four hours later the blue hoops were among the prizes in the Wolverhampton Half Marathon with Steve Holdcroft recording a lightning quick 1.17.36 to take fourth place, only just over two minutes behind the winner. He claimed first in his age group. Helen Tromans went one better claiming first place in the ladies race for the second time coming home in 1.33.46 to take 31st place overall in a field of nearly 500.

Carling kit deal to refresh Rangers

A QUARTET of football teams have received new strips as part of a sponsorship deal.

Black Country Rangers, Fusion, Ladies and Veterans – all under the Black Country FC banner – have been provided fresh kits by Carling.

Wolverhampton Sunday League Division Four outfit Fusion were set up in 2015 and welcome LGBT players.

Rangers play in the West Midlands Premier and sit top of the table after six games. The ladies are in the Staffordshire Girls and Ladies League, and the Veterans in the Staffordshire Veterans League.

★★★

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Friday 21st September
Monday 24th September
Appointments available between 9.30am - 11.00am

T: 01384 686850 E: info@crestwood-s.dudley-sch.uk
A: Bromley Lane, Kingswinford, DY6 8QG

INVICTUS Education Trust

For more information about our school visit our website www.crestwoodschool.co.uk

CrestwoodSchool

Crestwood SCHOOL & SIXTH FORM

Welcome from the Headteacher

I am honoured and delighted to be the new Headteacher of Crestwood School and Sixth Form. Having served as Deputy Headteacher under the inspirational and strategic leadership of Mr Tony Bowles, now CEO of Invictus, you can be rest assured that our shared vision and values will continue to shape the future of Crestwood.

I firmly believe that a good state education is a right and not a privilege and this coupled with the shared Invictus vision that each and every one of our students irrespective of background or ability deserves access to the type of opportunities offered by the best the independent sector can offer is unique within our community.

I am extremely proud, but not surprised, of our most recent Ofsted judgement of Good with Outstanding features (February 2018). A good school knows its strengths and weaknesses and it was wonderful for our staff and students to be recognised for all of their hard work and efforts over recent years.

The vision that our community deserves to be served by at least a Good school has been realised but we refuse to rest on our laurels and our intention is to be consistently outstanding when next inspected.

Progress and attainment will always be paramount but never at the expense of a rich and inclusive education where students are at the centre of everything, are fully supported, valued and encouraged to go way beyond what they ever thought possible.

At Crestwood we fully believe that anything is possible and whether that is within the realms of academia, on the sporting field, within the Arts or serving the wider community your son or daughter will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Our culture of hard work, commitment and consistent approaches goes hand in hand with excellent teaching mutual respect and bags of enthusiasm. Our ethos is one of inclusivity and aspiration. Our determination to be the absolute best we can be is infectious. We proudly work in collaboration with parents, carers our community, local/feeder primaries and other stakeholders.

I look forward to welcoming you to our wonderful school and working with you over the coming years.

We continue to embrace IT. All new Year 7 students have access to an iPad to help support their learning further - an innovative project that reaped rewards with the current Year 8, 9 and 10 students, from September all 4 of 5 year groups students will have access to an iPad.

"6th Form applications going from strength to strength"

The 2015-2016 academic year saw the launch of our very own 6th Form in collaboration with Invictus 6th Form, the first time we have hosted post 16 study since 1991. I am very passionate about providing an opportunity for our students to continue their studies here at our school. We offer a wide variety of courses, both A-level and BTEC, and can offer unrivalled pastoral care and support to all of our students. Crestwood 6th form students also benefit from the resources and teaching expertise the 5 other Invictus Schools offer. The success of our first two years have led to some wonderful feedback from our Year 12 and Year 13 students, so much so that applications have doubled year on year, we have over 40 applicants for the 2018-2019 academic year meaning that we have had to extend the 6th Form common room this summer! If you would like further information please speak to any member of the teaching team to request a copy of the Invictus 6th Form Prospectus. I look forward to working together with you to see your child thrive at school reaching above and beyond their full potential.

Mrs C Sutton – Headteacher

iPads...

a resounding success!

We are about to embark on our 4th year of 1 to 1 iPad provision for our students, we are passionate about ensuring our students have access to the best, most up to date resources to support their learning, our ultimate goal is to offer a tablet to the whole school and we are now only 1 year away from realising that goal. The benefits of an iPad to support learning are becoming more and more apparent as each term passes, the students are becoming experts at using them and our staff are having to work even harder to keep ahead of them! You can see from the quotes below how much our students value this resource:

I don't have to spend ages looking through my book for a piece of work. It's just there when I need it.

I like the fact we can watch videos and play educational games rather than just looking at a text book.

We learned to program using Touch Develop on our iPads. I found it much easier on a touch screen.

I find it easier to take notes in class. I can also take pictures of displays and classwork to help me with my homework.

I'm dyslexic so the iPads help me to spell check my work and I can use Siri to ask for help.

The iPads have been a great help in Geography. I've been able to find out the OS maps symbols I need.

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We appreciate what a tough decision choosing a secondary school can be for you and your child. Everything we do here at Crestwood School and 6th Form is centred around our students, The best way to measure what our students and their parents think about them is by asking them… so here is what they think!

Parent Voice

'I chose this school for my son because of the attitude shown from everyone involved with the school; I was greatly impressed by the staff and pupils at the open evening'

'Crestwood was the best school we saw over the course of the open days'

'My Daughter liked this school very much, she felt really comfortable when we walked around. She was even asking questions which is unusual for her as she is a really shy girl. We were really impressed on how many opportunities this school has to offer.'

PERFORMING ARTS POWERHOUSE

Over the last year our performing arts team, comprised of our music and drama departments, have pushed the standard of school performances to a level never seen before. The 2 flagship events during last year were the 'Night On Broadway' show and our annual whole school production of 'We Will Rock You'. Night On Broadway saw the most pupils taking part in any concert in the history of the school, over 100 students in total. Including 55 Year 7 students! A measure of how quickly our year 7's can become involved with performing arts at Crestwood School. The sold out audience were wowed by the standard of performance from our students.

We Will Rock You was definitely the highlight of the year and really demonstrated a thirst for performing from our students. 3 completely sold out shows were held, in fact over the 3 nights there were 600 available tickets, over 700 were sold before we completely ran out of auxiliary seating. The strength of performance from the cast was truly remarkable and the feedback from audiences was overwhelming.

The passion and enthusiasm from our students and has led to a complete overhaul of the performing arts facilities. A brand new drama studio, new music suite equipped with state of the art apple mac computers, a stage, sound and lighting set up that would not be out of place in a city theatre, 200 capacity retractable seating unit and a complete refurbishment of the theatre during last summer have ensured the facilities and equipment match our students talent, which is unrivalled!

STUDENT LEADERSHIP AT THE HEART OF CRESTWOOD SCHOOL

So much so that we have created the Student Leadership Pathway. We feel there is no better way to embed outstanding behaviours than to teach, guide and serve others.

In recent years there have been a number of new roles created for our students to help serve others, after all our school Motto and badge states "Service Not Self" The amount of roles and positions on offer are now so vast we feel by publishing a clear pathway our students can plot their way through their time at Crestwood School, identifying which roles they would like to progress to, or who they may be able to lean on for support.

We also have lots of fantastic students join us from primary schools each year in September and a huge number of these students have held prestigious positions at their primary schools. We want to make sure when these students join us they can see the opportunities available to them and how they can progress each year to different roles which could potentially result in becoming Head Girl or Head Boy.

Each role on the Student Leadership Pathway comes with its own job description and role specification which highlights which member of staff is responsible for that team, how and when to apply and also which member of the Senior Leadership Team is the ambassador for the team or role. This helps our students understand who they can speak to for support and advice.

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Crestwood County Cup Winners

County Champions

Our year 11 boys football team fought valiantly against a very good Summerhill team in the final of the Duncan Edwards Cup to finish their time at Crestwood as cup winners, a game and night that will live long in the memory of all those involved. On top of this they also ran out league winners, a magnificent double to end their secondary school careers!

Sport at Crestwood

Sport in all forms is incredibly popular and successful at Crestwood and we are extremely fortunate in having our own swimming pool and 4G pitch. Whatever their level of ability students are encouraged to participate both competitively and socially. As well as traditional sports including hockey, football, cricket and basketball, students are provided with increasing opportunities to add to their experiences with new activities. Numerous clubs complement the core provision and these allow students to take part in an even wider range of activities. They become more proficient and skilled by receiving extra coaching and learn to become umpires, referees and coaches themselves. Students are encouraged to develop their performance to the highest level and many go on to achieve Borough, County and even National status. Year 9 students have the opportunity to gain a BTEC First Diploma in Sport and Year 10 students can begin to work towards the Junior Sports Leader Award. This supports students in developing leadership and coaching skills across a range of sports and activities. We are currently in our final year of the RFU All Schools programme.

This means that the RFU recognised our potential as a rugby playing school and have supported us with £10,000 worth of funding to upgrade equipment, offer expert specialised coaching for our students and allow our fantastic PE team to attend RFU Coach Education courses. When the 3-year program is completed we will have school teams represented in local leagues and a pathway for our students to local clubs. During the 3 year project we have taken students to Twickenham, who designed a bespoke Canterbury kit that our school 1st team now proudly wear and have been invited to various rugby festivals, winning our fair share!

All of the lessons and activities are complimented by our truly outstanding facilities which comprise of:

- State of the art floodlit 4G pitch
- 12 acre sports field, home to our football, hockey and rugby pitches
- 3 outdoor tennis courts
- Fully equipped sports centre
- Newly refurbished gymnasium
- Newly refurbished swimming pool
- 4 indoor cricket nets
- 2 trampolines
- 5 outdoor and 4 indoor table tennis tables
- 4 badminton courts
- Grass running track

Olympian Programme

Crestwood School is now proudly OVERSUBSCRIBED. This status allows us to offer spaces to students that aren't in our catchment area based on their sporting aptitude. If you/your child is currently in year 5 you can apply for a space at Crestwood School on our Olympian Programme.

Applicants will be invited to a Talent Identification day held at the school in the Autumn Term of 2018. Students with the highest scores will be assured of their space at Crestwood School and form our inaugural Olympian Team.

The Olympian Programme will not affect our local catchment area students, we will be accepting 10% above and beyond our regular 150 spaces for students with high sporting aptitude.

Application packs will be available at our Open Evening Wednesday 19th September

Spread the word, we are serious about sport…

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